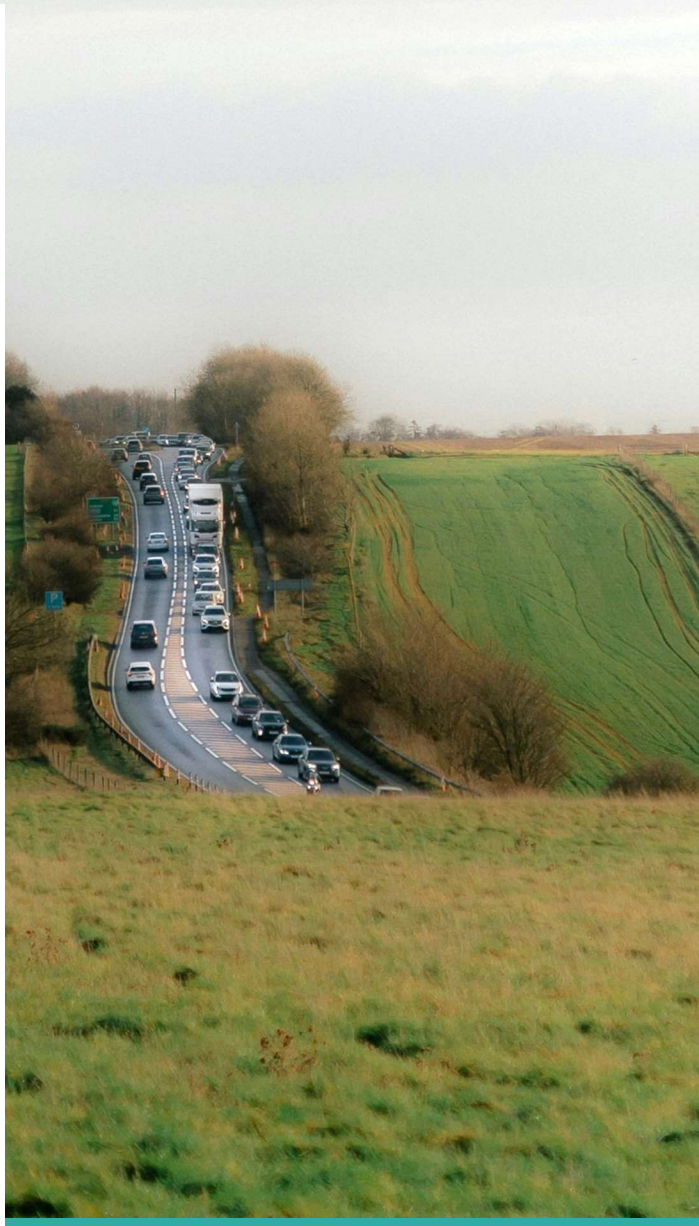
WELCOMING ROADS

A National Road Safety Strategy



Evidence-Based Proposals for the UK's Autumn 2025 Road Safety Strategy

September 2025

The Motorcycle Action Group

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Motorcycle Action Group

Executive Summary

The UK's road safety progress has stagnated under approaches that could benefit from enhanced evidence-based methodologies applied systematically across all road user groups. The Department for Transport's autumn road safety strategy presents a critical opportunity to restore the UK's position as a world leader in road safety through the comprehensive "Welcoming Roads" framework that treats safety as the primary objective while recognising the legitimate needs of all road users through systematic application of evidence-based principles.

While the Motorcycle Action Group's primary concern is motorcycle safety, the evidence demonstrates that effective road safety policy requires systematic approaches applied consistently across all road user groups: pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and motor vehicle users. The persistent "failed to observe and risk assess properly" contributory factor - currently recorded as "failed to look properly" by the Department for Transport as a common factor in casualties involving multiple road user types - fundamentally involves interactions between all road user groups and appears in both fatal and serious collisions regardless of speed, suggesting that traditional speed-focused interventions alone cannot address the core problems of observation and awareness failure.

Early adoption experiences (including Oxfordshire County Council's 2024 Vision Zero Strategy acknowledging Welcoming Roads methodology for motorcycle safety applications) demonstrate both the political feasibility of evidence-based approaches and highlight why comprehensive system-wide implementation across all road user groups delivers superior coordination and outcomes compared to selective application to individual transport modes. The approach has also received formal endorsement from the National Motorcyclists Council, indicating broad stakeholder consensus around systematic evidence-based safety approaches.

Effective road safety therefore requires systematic improvements to education, infrastructure design, and enforcement approaches that address observation and awareness skills comprehensively across all road user groups. This is not a report about minority issues, but a comprehensive attempt to improve road safety for all users by addressing the fundamental detection and awareness failures that create casualties across different speed environments and road user interactions. While appropriate speed management remains important, we suggest that traditional speed enforcement approaches have reached their effectiveness limits, and that sustainable speed management requires the education, infrastructure design, and community engagement tools that comprehensive Welcoming Roads provides rather than continued reliance on automated enforcement systems alone.

This paper presents comprehensive national-level policy proposals that can deliver measurable casualty reductions across all road user groups while rebuilding public confidence in road safety policy. The Welcoming Roads framework offers systematic approaches to accelerate Vision Zero ambitions while building broader public support and stakeholder engagement through evidence-based methodology applied consistently across all transport modes, supported by rigorous evidence and proportionate resource allocation.

Key Recommendations

- ✓ Implement systematic continuous improvement methodology to accelerate Vision Zero progress while maintaining a pragmatic approach across all road user groups (Section 1: Evidence-Based Licensing and Training Reform)

- ✓ Restore consensual road traffic policing principles replacing over-reliance on automated enforcement with community-based approaches benefiting all road users (Section 2: Consensual Road Traffic Policing Restoration)

- ✓ Create unified infrastructure design standards that systematically address all road user needs through integrated approaches (Section 3: Infrastructure Design Standards Revolution)

- ✓ Establish proportionate funding allocation reflecting actual casualty distribution across all road user groups with transparent accountability mechanisms (Section 4: Proportionate Funding Framework)

- ✓ Create unified regulatory framework for all powered two-wheelers ending regulatory uncertainty (Section 5: Unified Powered Two-Wheeler Regulatory Framework)

- ✓ Develop multi-pathway approach to vehicle safety standards using optimal combination of procurement, incentives, and regulatory mechanisms benefiting all road users (Section 6: Vehicle Safety and Detection Standards)

- ✓ Revoke Highway Code hierarchy provisions that undermine personal responsibility and create divisive attitudes between road user groups (Section 7: Highway Code Hierarchy Revision)

- ✓ Coordinate safety campaign management to eliminate duplication and ensure consistent evidence-based messaging across all road user groups (Section 8: Coordinated Safety Campaign Management)

The Case for Change: Why Current Approaches Need Enhancement

The UK Government's Pragmatic Position and System-Wide Opportunities

Research reveals that the UK Department for Transport has demonstrated commendable restraint in not formally adopting Vision Zero ideology that may create hierarchical approaches between different road user groups. Unlike many international counterparts, UK road safety plans have some similarities with Vision Zero, but do not specifically adopt target-driven approaches that may fragment policy development by transport mode. The DfT's 2011 Strategic Framework explicitly rejected over-arching national targets, stating "We do not consider that over-arching national targets are now the most appropriate course for road safety" while maintaining focus on systematic evidence-based approaches.

This pragmatic stance should be commended for avoiding some of the coordination difficulties seen with target-driven ideological approaches that may create divisive attitudes between road user groups. However, the absence of Vision Zero targets has not prevented stagnation, highlighting what we suggest is a deeper structural problem requiring systematic coordination mechanisms across all road user groups.

The Stagnation Challenge and Historical Success Across All Transport Modes

The UK's road safety progress has plateaued despite avoiding some of the implementation challenges seen with target-driven approaches that fragment by transport mode. Since 2010 the fatality statistics have flatlined across all road user groups. There has been little change in the number of reported fatalities on British roads since 2010, with approximately 1,700 deaths annually affecting all transport modes.

However, this stagnation followed a period of remarkable systematic success, achieved during the 2000s. By 2009, the results were: killed or seriously injured 44% lower; children killed or seriously injured 61% lower and the slight casualty rate was 37% lower compared to the 1994-1998 baseline. This reduction was achieved primarily through systematic engagement with all road users to educate as well as enforcement and road engineering to make for better road layouts and signage, with very little actual on-road driving riding training involved. The transformation came from systematic adjustment of mindset and approach across all transport modes rather than increased restrictions that might fragment approaches by user type.

Since 2010, there have been no major new systematic initiatives, and reductions in police numbers with traffic policing being a major casualty have contributed to the plateau in casualty reduction across all road user groups. Comparing representative non-COVID years: 2013 saw 1,713 deaths compared to 2023 with 1,624 - a drop of just 5%, owed much more to vehicle manufacturers making collisions more avoidable and survivable with technology than any systematic improvement in driving standards across all road user interactions.

Statistical Reality Across All Road User Groups

- This plateauing is not specific to Great Britain; it has also occurred across the EU and other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries since about 2013, affecting all transport modes

- Our analysis of recent International Transport Forum data suggests that powered two-wheeler casualties represent a particular challenge across different policy approaches, with PTW fatalities being the only road user category to increase internationally while pedestrians, cyclists, and car occupants achieved significant decreases, indicating need for systematic approaches that address all road user interactions

- Motorcycle casualties represent 19% of road deaths but receive disproportionately low policy attention, while systematic approaches could deliver benefits across all road user groups

- The “failed to observe and risk assess properly” contributory factor (currently recorded as “failed to look properly”) persists as a leading cause of casualties affecting multiple road user types, occurring across all speed ranges and indicating that speed-focused interventions alone cannot address the primary causation mechanisms affecting all road user interactions

- Traditional speed-focused interventions show diminishing returns while observation and awareness factors remain unaddressed despite being dominant causation factors in serious casualties affecting multiple transport modes

The Missing Framework Problem and Need for System-Wide Coordination

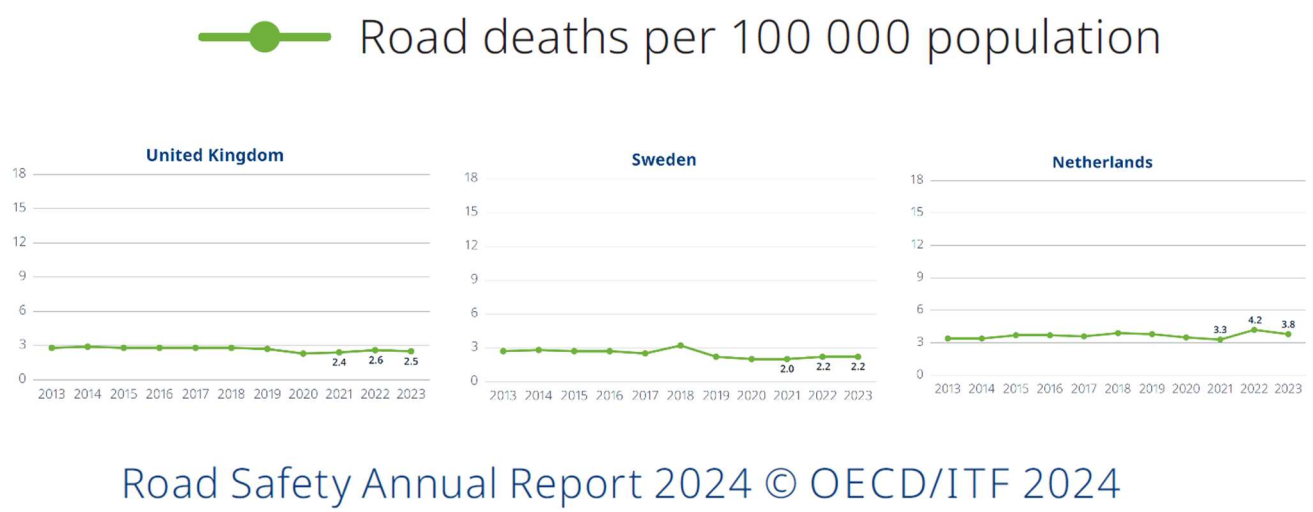
While the UK Government has wisely avoided some ideological pitfalls that may create divisive approaches between road user groups, critics have persistently demanded road safety targets. Organisations like the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) argue that "The Government should take a lead from Scotland and Wales and adopt road safety targets across England to push down the number of deaths and casualties."

We suggest the Government's resistance to target pressure that may fragment approaches by transport mode is correct, but the lack of a systematic continuous improvement framework applied consistently across all road user groups has left it vulnerable to this criticism. Without visible systematic progress mechanisms covering all transport modes, target advocates argue that the absence of specific goals demonstrates insufficient commitment to comprehensive safety improvement.

Why Systematic Continuous Improvement Succeeds Where Fragmented Targets Fail

International evidence reveals significant challenges with both target-based approaches and their alternatives when applied selectively rather than systematically across all road user groups. Sweden's own Vision Zero programme has stagnated: the decrease in fatalities has "levelled out" and Swedish authorities acknowledge "we have reached a plateau." In 2017, Swedish officials reported that fatalities had actually increased to 270 deaths, up from 2015 levels. Meanwhile, the Netherlands' Sustainable Safety approach has also stagnated: "As of 2010, there is no clear trend in the number of road deaths “with 745 road deaths in 2022 being "the highest number in 14 years".

This evidence demonstrates a broader pattern affecting approaches that may fragment by transport mode. As the UK Government's own 2019 Road Safety Statement acknowledged, this plateauing is not specific to Great Britain; it has also occurred across the EU and other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries since about 2013. The stagnation appears to affect both ideological target-driven approaches (Sweden) and systematic safety approaches (Netherlands), suggesting deeper structural issues requiring the comprehensive continuous improvement methodology that systematic Welcoming Roads provides across all road user groups.



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However, we suggest that successful continuous improvement requires systematic application across all transport modes:

- Systematic Plan-Do-Check-Act cycles rather than ad-hoc interventions that may fragment by user type
- Transparent progress measurement showing learning and adaptation across all road user groups
- Proportionate resource allocation reflecting actual casualty statistics across all transport modes
- Evidence-based policy development free from modal bias that may create divisive approaches
- Public acceptance and political sustainability - avoiding the backlash seen with approaches perceived as targeting specific transport modes, such as Wales's blanket 20mph limits, which attracted a record-breaking 469,571 petition signatures and forced the government into costly policy refinements and reversals on many roads

We believe the UK's challenge is implementing these systematic approaches while maintaining its pragmatic rejection of unrealistic targets and ensuring policies build rather than erode public support for road safety measures across all transport modes.

The Welcoming Roads Alternative: System-Wide Evidence-Based Approach

Core Philosophy Applied Systematically:

Welcoming Roads recognises that roads are shared public assets serving all citizens equally across all transport modes. We suggest this systematic approach:

- Treats safety as the primary objective across all road user groups with other benefits (modal shift, environmental goals) flowing as positive externalities
- Applies evidence-based continuous improvement rather than target-driven ideology that may fragment by transport mode
- Ensures proportionate responses based on casualty risk across all road user groups rather than modal preference or hierarchical assumptions
- Builds inclusive policies that unite rather than divide road users through consistent evidence-based principles
- Maintains transparent accountability through clear measurement and public reporting across all transport modes

The Evidence Base for System-Wide Change:

Comprehensive Road Safety Context:

- All road user groups contribute to casualty patterns requiring systematic coordinated responses
- Motorcyclists represent 19% of road deaths (315 out of 1,624 total fatalities in 2023) despite being only 0.9% of vehicle miles travelled (3.0 out of 336.2 billion vehicle miles in 2024), while pedestrians and cyclists also face significant risks requiring coordinated policy development

- "Failed to observe and risk assess properly" (recorded as "failed to look properly") affects casualties across all road user groups - recorded as a common factor involving multiple road user types in fatal or serious collisions, occurring consistently across different speed environments and road types affecting all transport modes
- Current approaches often fragment by transport mode, limiting opportunities to develop enhanced systematic observation and hazard perception approaches that could benefit all road user groups
- Infrastructure design standards inadequately consider integrated detection and visibility requirements that could reduce observation and risk assessment failures affecting multiple road user types simultaneously

Systematic Issues Requiring Coordinated Solutions:

- Road safety spending allocation often appears inverse to casualty rates across road user groups
- Policy development driven by ideology rather than systematic evidence covering all transport modes
- Lack of systematic evaluation of intervention effectiveness across all road user groups
- Fragmented approach across different government levels and transport modes

National Government Policy Framework for System-Wide Implementation

1. Evidence-Based Licensing and Training Reform Across All Transport Modes

The Problem:

Current licensing systems across all vehicle categories lack evidence base linking training routes to casualty outcomes, while fragmented approaches to road user education undermine the shared responsibility principles essential to systematic Welcoming Roads implementation across all road user groups.

The fundamental issue extends beyond individual transport mode licensing to encompass the entire road user training framework. Different road user groups receive disconnected education that often emphasizes speed management rather than the observation, awareness, and decision-making skills that prevent the "failed to observe and risk assess properly" casualties that dominate serious injury statistics across all road user interactions. This fragmentation contributes to the persistent detection and awareness failures that affect all road user groups regardless of the speeds involved in collisions.

The Universal Solution: Speed-Surprise-Space-Consequence (SSSC) Model Implementation across All Road Users

The SSSC model provides the foundation for understanding how the Highway Code's repeated requirements for all road users to proceed "when it is safe to do so" and "take extra care" can be systematically applied across all transport modes. The Highway Code assumes all road users have developed "good sense of danger" but provides little basis for developing this crucial skill across different transport modes. The SSSC model addresses this gap by providing the systematic risk assessment framework that enables all road users to make sound judgments in the complex scenarios the Highway Code describes.

Comprehensive Implementation Framework:

Enhanced Licensing Reform (Primary Focus within Broader System):

1. Commission fundamental research linking STATS19 casualty data with DVLA licensing records to establish casualty risk profiles across all vehicle categories, with particular attention to motorcycle safety given the disproportionate casualty rates
2. Implement evidence-based progression incentives through targeted subsidy schemes to improve training quality across all transport modes
3. Establish systematic advanced training systems providing consistent risk assessment education across all road user groups
4. Pilot Speed-Surprise-Space-Consequence behavioral model against existing training approaches with measurable safety outcomes across all transport modes

Car Driver Training Integration:

While acknowledging the Government's stated resistance to graduated driver licensing (GDL) systems, the evidence demands enhanced driver education that can be implemented within existing licensing frameworks. Enhanced driver awareness of all vulnerable road user groups represents the most significant opportunity for casualty reduction given the scale of car driver involvement in serious casualties.

1. Integrate SSSC principles into existing driver theory and practical tests without requiring additional licensing stages
2. Establish enhanced vulnerable road user awareness modules covering systematic detection and interaction with pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and other vulnerable road users within current test framework
3. Establish post-test advanced driver training incentives using insurance premium reductions and voluntary uptake rather than mandatory progression requirements
4. Pilot enhanced hazard perception testing incorporating SSSC risk assessment principles for new driver licence applications

Universal Road User Education Framework:

The SSSC model's applicability extends beyond powered vehicle operators to create a unified approach to road safety education across all transport modes that embodies systematic Welcoming Roads principles:

Cyclist Education Integration:

- Incorporate SSSC principles into cycle training programmes (Bikeability and equivalent schemes) using consistent risk assessment methodology
- Develop systematic awareness modules teaching cyclists about motorcycle and other motor vehicle limitations and capabilities through integrated approaches
- Establish voluntary advanced cyclist training incorporating SSSC risk assessment for urban and rural environments

Pedestrian Safety Education:

- Integrate SSSC awareness into school road safety programmes, emphasising situational awareness and systematic risk recognition across all road user interactions
- Develop community-based pedestrian safety courses incorporating understanding of vehicle capabilities and limitations across all transport modes
- Create age-appropriate SSSC-based educational materials for different demographic groups using consistent methodology

Professional and Commercial Driver Enhancement:

- Establish SSSC-based vulnerable road user awareness training for all professional drivers (HGV, PSV, taxi, delivery) covering systematic detection and interaction with all vulnerable road user groups
- Require annual refresher training incorporating latest casualty analysis and systematic risk assessment techniques
- Establish higher professional driving standards using SSSC principles for commercial vehicle operators covering all road user interactions

Implementation Timeline:

- **Year 1**: Research commission, SSSC model development across all road user groups, pilot programme design, stakeholder coordination framework establishment
- **Year 2**: Enhanced subsidy scheme launch, car driver integration pilots, professional driver training rollout, local authority coordination protocols
- **Year 3**: Universal education framework implementation, integrated training programme launch, best practice sharing networks
- **Years 4-5**: Full system integration, evaluation, and refinement based on casualty reduction evidence across all road user groups

2. Consensual Road Traffic Policing Restoration Benefiting All Road Users

The Problem:

Current over-reliance on automated enforcement approaches has undermined police-public cooperation and failed to address the "failed to observe and risk assess properly" contributory factor that affects casualties across all road user groups.

The transition from traditional road traffic policing to predominantly automated enforcement systems has fundamentally altered the relationship between police and all road users. While automated systems have their place in road safety, over-reliance on speed cameras and automated penalties fails to address complex human factors that cause the majority of serious casualties across all road user interactions. The persistent "failed to observe and risk assess properly" factor in casualties involving multiple road user types reflects deeper issues of driver awareness, attention, and decision-making that cannot be resolved through automated enforcement alone.

Evidence-Based Alternative Approach:

The 1947 Road Safety Commission established principles that enabled Britain to achieve world-leading road safety performance before automated enforcement approaches became dominant. The Commission stated: "Any system under which fear becomes the controlling factor in obtaining the required reaction among so large a section of the public who, as individuals, are generally law abiding, is not, we think, likely to produce the most effective results."

Proposed Solution:

Restore Locally-Based Road Traffic Patrols:

- Re-establish dedicated road traffic police officers with local knowledge and community connections covering all road user interactions
- Enable professional discretion in addressing behaviour across all transport modes, moving beyond rigid automated responses
- Implement intelligence-led traffic policing focusing on locations and times with highest casualty risk across all road user groups
- Create sustained police presence in communities, building trust and local knowledge that enables effective safety interventions benefiting all road users
- Establish coordination mechanisms with local authorities ensuring consistent approaches across boundaries covering all transport modes

Reform Speed Limit Setting Using Evidence-Based Approaches:

- **Maintain Proven National Framework**:

Retain the established 30/60/70mph speed limit system as the evidence-based national standard, recognising its role in providing consistent, predictable road environments that all road users understand

- **Evidence-based Local Variations:**

Enable local authorities to implement variations from national standards only where specific casualty data, road design characteristics, or demonstrable safety evidence justifies deviation from the proven framework affecting all road user groups

- **Transparent Justification Requirements:**

Require local authorities to publish evidence-based justification for any speed limit changes, demonstrating how proposed variations will deliver measurable safety improvements for all road users rather than pursuing other policy objectives under the guise of safety measures

- **Avoid Blanket Policy Approaches:**

Resist broad-brush speed limit changes that lack site-specific evidence covering all road user groups, learning from implementation challenges experienced with approaches in other jurisdictions that have created public resistance and enforcement difficulties

- **85th Percentile Principle Application:**

Where local variations are proposed, apply 85th percentile methodology to ensure speed limits reflect safe traffic flow and community understanding, optimizing compliance and safety outcomes for all road users

- **Clear Policy Separation:**

Distinguish explicitly between speed limits set for road safety purposes (based on casualty evidence and road design covering all road user groups) and those intended for other policy objectives, ensuring transparent decision-making processes

Develop Comprehensive Driver Education and Engagement:

- Move beyond "speed kills" messaging to comprehensive education addressing observation, awareness, and decision-making skills that prevent the "failed to observe and risk assess properly“ casualties across all road user interactions
- Implement community-based road safety education programmes involving local police officers, focusing on detection and awareness training covering all road user groups rather than selective enforcement by transport mode
- Create positive engagement opportunities between police and all road users, rebuilding cooperative relationships while addressing the primary causation factors in casualties affecting all transport modes

- Focus education on addressing "failed to observe and risk assess properly" and other observation-related causation factors affecting all road user interactions, recognising these occur across all speed ranges and road types

Devolved Administration Coordination:

- Respect devolved competencies while sharing evidence and best practice through established intergovernmental mechanisms covering all transport modes
- Evidence sharing protocols creating systematic channels for sharing casualty data, implementation experience, and evaluation outcomes between England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland to inform evidence-based policy development
- Best practice identification focusing on approaches that demonstrate measurable safety improvements across all road user groups rather than ideological consistency
- Focus on identifying and promoting approaches that demonstrate measurable safety improvements rather than ideological consistency, enabling each administration to learn from others' experiences

3. Infrastructure Design Standards Revolution for All Road Users

The Problem:

Current Design Manual for Roads and Bridges lacks unified design guidance that enables systematic consideration of all road user needs simultaneously, leading to fragmented decision-making where trade-offs between different user groups remain hidden and suboptimal for overall safety outcomes.

Joint research by the Motorcycle Action Group and the University of Nottingham provides compelling evidence of how fragmented guidance translates into inconsistent implementation. Analysis of Local Transport Plans across England reveals that 25% fail to mention motorcycles in any context whatsoever, directly contradicting assumptions that existing guidance ensures adequate systematic consideration for all road users.

When one quarter of local transport authorities completely omit consideration of particular road user groups from their strategic planning documents, this demonstrates how fragmented guidance systems fail to ensure comprehensive consideration of all legitimate road user needs.

Proposed Solution:

Phase 1: Unified Design Framework Development (Year 1)

- Establish integrated design working group including representatives from all road user groups, bringing together existing specialist expertise from motorcycle, cycling, pedestrian, accessibility, and motor vehicle safety design communities
- Consolidate existing specialist guidance documents into unified DMRB framework enabling systematic consideration of all road user needs simultaneously
- Develop systematic trade-off assessment methodology enabling designers to make evidence-based decisions when different user group requirements compete for limited road space
- Create integrated design decision trees that make conflicts visible and require explicit justification for design choices affecting any road user group
- Establish coordination mechanisms with local authorities to ensure consistent implementation

Phase 2: Integrated Assessment Requirements (Years 2-3)

- Revise DMRB standards requiring explicit systematic assessment of impacts on all road user groups for every scheme design, using unified assessment frameworks
- Establish systematic integrated design review processes that consider all road user requirements simultaneously rather than sequentially
- Establish systematic conflict resolution protocols requiring evidence-based justification when design decisions favour some user groups over others
- Implement unified design consultation requirements bringing all road user representative organizations together for collaborative input
- Create local authority coordination frameworks ensuring consistent implementation across boundaries

Phase 3: Systematic Implementation Support (Years 2-5)

- Develop integrated training programmes for design professionals covering systematic multi-modal design assessment
- Create design decision support tools enabling rapid assessment of design options against multiple user group requirements simultaneously
- Establish design quality assurance processes ensuring systematic consideration of all user groups
- Implement best practice sharing mechanisms highlighting successful integrated design solutions
- Establish stakeholder engagement protocols ensuring ongoing input from all user group representatives

Addressing Implementation Consistency:

- Integrate road user consideration requirements into funding allocation criteria, ensuring systematic rather than ad-hoc consideration
- Develop template guidance enabling local authorities to implement integrated design approach consistently
- Establish peer learning networks sharing successful integrated design practices
- Create performance monitoring systems tracking implementation of systematic design approaches
- Establish coordination mechanisms between authorities to share best practice and ensure consistency

4. Proportionate Funding Framework for All Road User Groups

The Problem:

Road safety spending allocation often appears inconsistent with casualty distribution across road user groups, with limited transparency about how resources are allocated relative to actual safety outcomes.

Proposed Solution:

Evidence-Based Funding Allocation:

Implement a casualty-based funding formula that allocates road safety budgets proportionally to casualty statistics across all road user groups. We suggest using fatality statistics as the primary allocation basis as they represent the clearest and most unambiguous measure of road safety failure, providing an objective basis for resource allocation that aligns with preventing the most serious outcomes across all transport modes.

We believe that proportionate allocation creates accountability - if motorcyclists represent 19% of road deaths, motorcycle safety should receive a minimum of 19% of road safety funding, with similar proportionate allocation for pedestrian, cyclist, and other road user casualty prevention. This approach offers several advantages:

- Clarity and simplicity using consistently recorded metrics
- Alignment with safety priorities focusing resources on preventing the most serious outcomes
- Political defensibility using the same metrics that dominate policy discourse
- Transparency creating clear, auditable relationship between problems and resource allocation across all road user groups

Alternative Measurement Consideration:

We recognise that some stakeholders may prefer funding allocation based on Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) statistics, which provide a broader measure of road safety outcomes across all transport modes. While KSI data presents measurement complexities due to evolving definitions of serious injury, we remain open to dialogue

on this alternative approach. The continuous improvement methodology we advocate enables systematic evaluation of different allocation models based on their effectiveness at delivering casualty reduction outcomes across all road user groups.

Implementation Framework:

- Establish budget transparency requirements demanding annual breakdown of spending by road user type and systematic outcome measurement
- Establish accountability mechanisms requiring ministerial justification when funding allocation deviates from casualty-proportionate distribution across road user groups
- Create systematic review processes enabling evidence-based refinement of funding allocation models
- Implement performance measurement linking funding allocation to proportionate casualty reduction outcomes across all road user groups
- Establish coordination mechanisms ensuring consistent approaches across local authorities

Transparency and Accountability:

- Publish annual reports showing spending allocation against casualty statistics by road user type
- Require proportionate casualty reduction analysis ensuring that safety improvements benefit all road user groups equitably
- Enable public scrutiny of funding decisions through clear reporting mechanisms covering all transport modes
- Establish independent review processes for funding allocation methodology ensuring that intervention complexity does not disadvantage particular road user groups

5. Unified Powered Two-Wheeler Regulatory Framework

The Problem:
E-scooter and e-bike regulatory uncertainty creates safety risks, enforcement difficulties, and data contamination that undermines evidence-based policy development affecting all road users.

The current regulatory gap creates multiple problems. Illegal powered two-wheelers involved in casualties are recorded alongside legitimate transport modes in casualty statistics, creating false impressions about safety trends and making it impossible to develop targeted interventions for genuine safety issues versus regulatory compliance problems. This data contamination affects policy development for all transport modes.

Proposed Solution:

Core Regulatory Framework: Apply existing motorcycle regulation to all powered two-wheelers including e-scooters and e-bikes, with registration requirements that enable practical enforcement while maintaining appropriate licensing distinctions.

Registration-Based Enforcement Solution: Rather than eliminating EAPC (Electrically Assisted Pedal Cycle) categories entirely, require registration for all powered two-wheelers while maintaining existing licensing distinctions:

- **Compliant EAPC**: Registration required with visible identification, no licence needed if genuinely pedal-assisted and speed-limited
- **Non-compliant powered two-wheelers**: Registration plus motorcycle licensing requirements (CBT minimum)

This approach addresses the fundamental enforcement problem: police cannot practically determine EAPC compliance without stopping and testing every electric bike. Registration enables instant identification of legally compliant vehicles while maintaining distinction for genuinely pedal-assisted vehicles.

Implementation Elements:

- End trial programme extensions and implement permanent framework using established motorcycle legislation
- Close professional delivery loopholes ending indefinite CBT operation for commercial riders
- Align enforcement powers applying existing motorcycle penalties and seizure procedures
- Regulate retail sales and marketing through established dealership frameworks
- Address proliferation of illegal vehicles at source rather than relying on costly long-term police enforcement

Data Integrity Benefits:

Registration enables proper separation of casualty statistics between pedal cycles, compliant EAPCs, motorcycles, and illegal powered two-wheelers, addressing the data contamination that currently undermines evidence-based policy development for all transport modes.

6. Vehicle Safety and Detection Standards for All Road Users

The Problem:

New vehicle safety systems often fail to detect vulnerable road users effectively, contributing to the persistent "failed to observe and risk assess properly" causation factor in casualties involving multiple road user types.

Alternative Implementation Approaches:

The fundamental policy objective - ensuring vehicle detection systems work effectively for all vulnerable road users - can be achieved through several regulatory pathways:

Option 1: UK Type Approval Requirements

- **Approach**: Amend UK-CA standards to require effective detection of all vulnerable road user groups
- **Advantages**: Direct regulatory control, clear requirements, applies to all new vehicles
- **Limitations**: UK market alone may be insufficient to drive manufacturer investment

Option 2: UNECE Collaboration Route

- Approach: Lead UK advocacy within UNECE working groups to develop international standards for all vulnerable road user detection
- **Advantages**: Leverages broader European market scale, creates consistent international standards
- **Limitations**: Longer development timescales, requires consensus building

Option 3: Procurement and Incentive Framework

- **Approach**: Use government purchasing power, insurance industry partnerships, and fiscal incentives to encourage voluntary adoption
- **Advantages**: Avoids regulatory complexity, can be implemented immediately, allows market-led innovation
- **Limitations**: Voluntary nature limits coverage

Recommended Implementation Strategy:

Apply continuous improvement methodology to determine the optimal approach:

- **Plan**: Commission detailed analysis of regulatory options, including manufacturer engagement
- **Do**: Implement pilot programme using government procurement requirements for enhanced detection systems
- **Check**: Evaluate uptake rates, technology development, casualty impact, and manufacturer responses
- **Act**: Scale successful approaches while adapting less effective mechanisms based on evidence

7. Highway Code Hierarchy Revision

The Problem:

The 2022 introduction of Rule H1 establishing a "hierarchy of road users" has created confusion about responsibilities and legal liability while undermining personal responsibility and promoting divisive attitudes between road user groups.

Rule H1's hierarchy approach fundamentally conflicts with the mutual responsibility principles essential to effective road safety across all transport modes. By suggesting that those "most likely to cause harm“ bear greater responsibility, it creates a framework that can excuse poor decision-making by those deemed "less responsible" while imposing unrealistic expectations on others. This approach undermines the personal responsibility that all road users must exercise and sets up divisive attitudes that work against collaborative road safety.

The hierarchy also conflicts with the SSSC model's emphasis on individual risk assessment and personal responsibility for safety decisions across all road user groups. When road users are told their level of responsibility depends on their transport mode rather than their individual decision-making, it undermines effective risk management.

Proposed Solution:

- Remove Rule H1 hierarchy provisions that conflict with statute law and undermine personal responsibility
- Restore mutual responsibility principle ensuring all road users understand their individual duties regardless of transport mode
- Align Highway Code with legal reality rather than aspirational hierarchy
- Support consistent messaging promoting shared responsibility, mutual respect, and individual accountability

8. Coordinated Safety Campaign Management for All Road Users

The Problem:

Campaign duplication and conflicting messages undermine effectiveness while creating confusion about road user responsibilities and potentially divisive attitudes between transport modes.

Proposed Solution:

- Establish national baseline campaigns covering all road user types as mandatory minimum using consistent messaging
- Create innovation pilot framework allowing stakeholder groups to propose evaluated improvements covering all road user groups
- Require multi-stakeholder approval ensuring campaigns promote mutual respect rather than division between transport modes
- Implement evidence-based adoption of successful innovations with national scaling
- Establish coordination mechanisms ensuring consistent messaging across different levels of government covering all road user groups

Multi-Level Governance Coordination for System-Wide Implementation

Addressing Implementation Dependencies

Welcoming Roads effectiveness depends on coordinated implementation across multiple levels of government, applying evidence-based principles systematically to all road user groups rather than selective application to individual transport modes. This requires sophisticated coordination mechanisms that respect democratic accountability and constitutional boundaries while enabling the comprehensive approach essential for evidence-based policy effectiveness across all road user groups.

Coordination Framework Elements

National Level Coordination:

- Policy framework setting applying evidence-based principles systematically to all road user groups
- Funding allocation mechanisms ensuring proportionate resource distribution
- Inter-governmental coordination with devolved administrations maintaining consistent approaches
- Professional standards and training covering all transport modes

Regional and Local Coordination:

- Implementation consistency across authority boundaries
- Best practice sharing covering systematic approaches to all road user groups
- Stakeholder engagement ensuring comprehensive rather than selective consultation
- Performance monitoring enabling systematic improvement

Preventing Policy Fragmentation:

- Default policy frameworks with evidence-based override criteria applying to all road user groups
- Financial incentive coordination requiring comprehensive rather than selective implementation
- Professional standards embedding systematic approaches to all transport modes
- Performance transparency enabling accountability for systematic implementation

Continuous Improvement Implementation

The Plan-Do-Check-Act Framework for All Road Users

- **Plan**: Systematic identification of problems through integrated data analysis covering all road user groups and hypothesis formation about comprehensive solutions
- **Do**: Implementation of interventions addressing multiple road user groups simultaneously with careful measurement across all transport modes
- **Check**: Rigorous evaluation of outcomes across all road user groups against baseline conditions and comparison with alternative systematic approaches
- **Act**: Adaptation of successful interventions for wider implementation across all transport modes, or abandonment of ineffective approaches in favour of comprehensive alternatives

Measuring Success Across All Road Users

Primary Indicators:

- Reduction in killed and seriously injured casualties across all road user types
- Improvement in casualty rates per mile travelled by mode showing systematic benefits
- Evidence of systematic learning and adaptation covering all transport modes
- Consistency of implementation across different authorities and road user groups

Process Indicators:

- Effectiveness of Plan-Do-Check-Act cycles in integrated intervention development
- Quality of evaluation processes covering all road user groups
- Speed of adaptation when interventions prove ineffective
- Stakeholder engagement effectiveness across all transport modes

Learning Indicators:

- Documentation of systematic approaches across all road user groups
- Transfer of successful approaches across different contexts
- Development of evidence base covering integrated approaches to all road user groups
- Systematic refinement based on real-world performance across all transport modes

Secondary Benefits from System-Wide Implementation:

- Modal shift occurring naturally through improved systematic safety
- Enhanced public confidence in transport authority decision-making through consistent approaches
- Improved organisational learning within government departments
- Reduced transport inequality through more inclusive systematic approaches

Political and Strategic Considerations

Building Consensus Across All Road User Groups

Welcoming Roads provides political advantages over traditional approaches that may fragment by transport mode:

- Cross-party appeal: Evidence-based approach avoids ideological divisions that may create divisive attitudes between road user groups
- Stakeholder unity: Inclusive systematic framework reduces opposition from road user groups through consistent evidence-based principles
- International leadership: Positions UK as innovator in pragmatic road safety policy covering all transport modes
- Measurable success: Clear metrics enable positive political messaging across all road user groups

Early adoption experiences demonstrate recognition of evidence-based approaches, with the National Motorcyclists Council providing formal endorsement, demonstrating stakeholder consensus around systematic approaches that can accelerate Vision Zero ambitions through comprehensive implementation.

Risk Management for System-Wide Implementation

Implementation risks:

- Stakeholder resistance to change from current fragmented approaches
- Coordination challenges across different government levels and transport modes
- Resource allocation disputes between departments and road user groups
- Political pressure for transport-mode-specific approaches rather than integrated policy development

Mitigation strategies:

- Phased implementation allowing adaptation and learning across all road user groups
- Clear accountability mechanisms with ministerial oversight covering systematic approaches

- Transparent evaluation and public reporting across all transport modes
- Stakeholder coordination frameworks ensuring consistent approaches across all road user groups

EU Divergence Opportunity for Comprehensive Approaches

Brexit provides opportunity to develop systematic evidence-based approaches rather than following ideological frameworks that may fragment by transport mode. Welcoming Roads could position the UK as a global leader in pragmatic, effective road safety policy that enhances Vision Zero ambitions through proven methodologies applied systematically across all road user groups.

Implementation Roadmap for System-Wide Adoption

Year 1: Foundation Setting

- Commission licensing and casualty research covering all transport modes
- Revoke Highway Code hierarchy provisions that create divisive attitudes
- Establish national campaign framework covering all road user groups
- Begin DMRB standards revision for integrated design approaches
- Create funding transparency requirements across all road user groups
- Establish stakeholder coordination mechanisms ensuring systematic consultation

Year 2: Programme Launch

- Implement enhanced subsidy schemes covering appropriate transport modes
- Launch advanced training systems covering all road user interactions
- Begin infrastructure safety programme using integrated approaches
- Establish local authority partnerships covering systematic implementation
- Start regulatory framework reform for powered two-wheelers
- Create best practice sharing networks covering all transport modes

Year 3: Expansion and Evaluation

- Complete regulatory framework implementation affecting all road users
- Roll out systematic best practice adoption across all transport modes

- Evaluate programme effectiveness across all road user groups
- Begin vehicle detection standards implementation benefiting all road users
- Publish first annual transparency reports covering all transport modes
- Expand stakeholder coordination frameworks ensuring comprehensive consultation

Years 4-5: Consolidation and Scaling

- Complete infrastructure safety improvements using systematic approaches
- Scale successful interventions nationally across all road user groups
- Conduct comprehensive programme evaluation covering all transport modes
- Establish long-term monitoring systems across all road user groups
- Share UK experience internationally covering systematic approaches to all transport modes

International Leadership Opportunity

The UK has the opportunity to lead internationally in demonstrating how systematic evidence-based, inclusive road safety policy can deliver both casualty reduction and broader transport objectives across all road user groups. Welcoming Roads provides a framework that other nations can adapt while positioning the UK as a global innovator in pragmatic safety policy that enhances Vision Zero ambitions through comprehensive approaches.

Building on early adoption experiences that demonstrate both the political feasibility of evidence-based approaches and the practical advantages of comprehensive implementation over selective application, this systematic approach will prove more durable across political cycles and more effective at engaging the public cooperation essential for road safety success across all transport modes.

Conclusion

The Department for Transport's autumn road safety strategy represents a critical opportunity to restore UK leadership in road safety through systematic evidence-based policy that enhances Vision Zero ambitions while uniting rather than dividing road users through consistent application of evidence-based principles across all transport modes. Welcoming Roads provides a comprehensive framework for achieving this transformation while delivering measurable casualty reductions and building public confidence in government decision-making.

The success of the 2000s period demonstrates what is possible when systematic evidence-based approaches engage with all road users constructively through integrated policy development. A 44% reduction in killed and seriously injured casualties was achieved by 2009, primarily through comprehensive education, appropriate enforcement, and improved road engineering applied across all road user groups - with minimal reliance on restrictive measures that create public resistance through fragmented approaches. This historical precedent shows that Welcoming Roads' emphasis on systematic improvement, comprehensive stakeholder engagement, and evidence-based policy can deliver results while maintaining public support across all transport modes.

Early adoption experiences, including recognition from established stakeholder organisations, demonstrate both the political feasibility of evidence-based approaches and the practical importance of comprehensive system-wide implementation rather than selective application to individual transport modes. The coordination challenges identified through early selective implementation highlight why systematic approaches applied consistently across all road user groups deliver superior outcomes.

The Motorcycle Action Group stands ready to support implementation of these systematic proposals and work constructively with all stakeholders to achieve our shared objective: safer roads for all UK citizens, regardless of their chosen mode of transport, through evidence-based approaches applied consistently across all road user groups.

We believe the choice for the Department for Transport is clear: continue with approaches that may fragment by transport mode and could benefit from enhanced coordination or embrace comprehensive evidence-based solutions that restore the UK's position as a world leader in road safety while accelerating Vision Zero ambitions through proven systematic methodologies applied consistently across all transport modes.

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This paper represents the considered position of the Motorcycle Action Group on systematic evidence-based approaches to national road safety policy covering all transport modes. We welcome constructive dialogue with the Department for Transport and other stakeholders on these comprehensive proposals.