

VISION ZERO

NO ROAD DEATHS










VISION ZERO FOR ESSEX

A SUMMARY OF THE VISION ZERO ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

2022



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FOREWORD



As chair of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership Governance Board representing eleven partner organisations, I am immensely proud to present our Vision Zero Strategy which documents how the partnership intends to achieve the aspiration for zero road deaths and serious injuries on Essex roads by 2040.

The partnership has already made great progress in reducing deaths and serious injuries on its roads; in 2020 some 722 deaths and serious injuries were recorded by Essex Police and whilst this figure represents a 49% reduction from the average value for the period between 2005 and 2009, it demonstrates how much work there is still to do.

I am under no illusion that achieving Vision Zero will be an easy task; it will require continued commitment, additional input and a more co-ordinated approach from all authorities, residents, businesses and mobility providers and users in Essex to initiate the step change that is required, but I genuinely believe Vision Zero is achievable.

This strategy promotes the “Safe System” approach to road safety which starts from the basic premise that human error is inevitable, but that deaths and serious injuries are not.

You and I are at the heart of this strategy. The Safe System surrounds us with five layers of protection. Our choice of vehicle, the safety of the road we travel on, our choice of speed, our willingness to comply with traffic laws and the effectiveness of emergency help we receive when a collision does occur all affect the outcome of our journey. These layers of protection are a matter of life and death.

I commend the strategy to you and ask that we all take the time to read it and make a conscious decision about our contribution to achieving Vision Zero for Essex.

Councillor Lesley Wagland OBE

Chair of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership Governance Board
Cabinet Member for Economic Renewal, Infrastructure and Planning at Essex County Council
Councillor for Brentwood Rural Division

This document is a summary of the Safer Essex Roads Partnership’s Vision Zero strategy and safe system approach to road safety. The full strategy document is available at:

saferessexroads.org/vision-zero-no-more-deaths-on-essex-roads

THE SAFER ESSEX ROADS PARTNERSHIP

The Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) was formed in April 2014 with the aim of delivering a coordinated road safety service across the area covered by Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council. This is also the area covered by Essex Police and Essex County Fire & Rescue Service and will simply be referred to as 'Essex' in this document.

The following organisations are members of The Partnership:



OUR VISION

"Vision Zero"

For there to be zero road deaths and serious injuries in Essex by 2040



Vision Zero is an aspiration that the Partnership cannot achieve alone. Safer roads benefit everyone so we are calling for all organisations and individuals in Essex to support and be part of the changes required. This will allow us all to benefit from a road network free from death and serious injury.

THE CURRENT PICTURE

Despite long-term progress in casualty reduction, there are still too many people suffering trauma, life changing injuries and loss of friends or family in road collisions.

Traditional road safety approaches in the UK have achieved much, and the UK is recognised as an international leader in road safety. However, progress has stalled as we near the maximum potential for what traditional approaches can achieve.

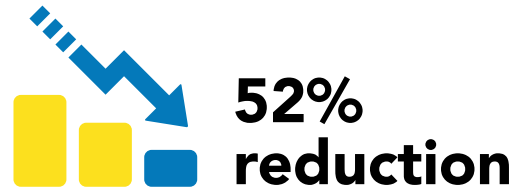
Everyone starts their journey expecting to reach their destination, so each collision is almost certainly a surprise to those involved. However, the causes of death and serious injury on the roads are predictable and therefore preventable. By addressing these known causes we can strengthen the 'layers of prevention and protection' for all road users. We must do this to stop more families being torn apart by sudden unexpected trauma.

One death on the road is one too many. People do make mistakes and have lapses in judgement but nobody deserves to die for having these very human characteristics. People should no longer accept the risk of death and serious injury as an inevitable cost of mobility.





is the annual average on the roads of Essex 2016-2021



in the number of deaths and serious injuries on the roads of Essex between 2005 and 2021

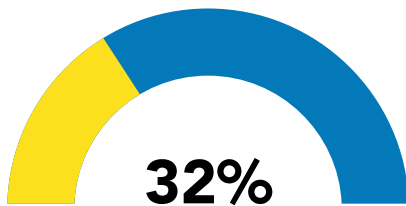


We can reduce harm on the roads by working in partnership with our colleagues across the emergency services and local authority partners but the people who can make a real difference are you – the people of Essex, who drive and use our roads.

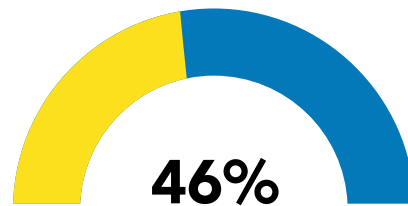


Roger Hirst, Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex

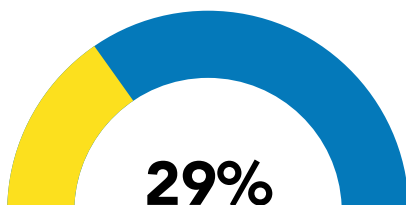
Factors involved in fatal and serious collisions



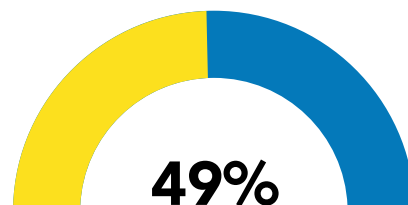
of deaths and serious injuries involve speed-related factors*



of road deaths occur on rural roads

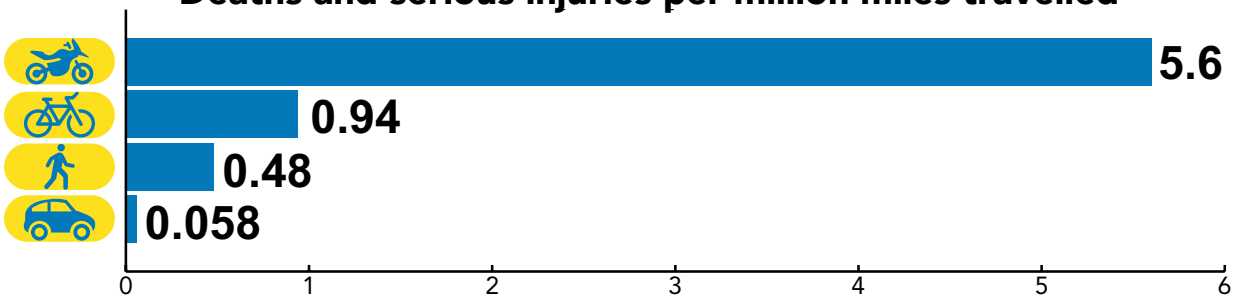


of deaths and serious injuries involve collisions between motor vehicles and pedestrians or cyclists



of deaths and serious injuries involve distraction or errors in observation*

Deaths and serious injuries per million miles travelled



For more information visit: saferessexroads.org/collision-data

* recorded as a contributory factor by the Police at the scene of the collision

VISION ZERO

What it is:

Vision Zero is the ethical position that deaths and serious injuries are not an acceptable consequence of human error on public roads. In Essex this means the aspiration that there should be no deaths or serious injuries on the roads by 2040. Traditional road safety approaches tend to focus on the responsibility of individual road users. Vision Zero expands this responsibility to include all people involved in designing, building, operating, maintaining and using the road network. However, Vision Zero does not diminish the responsibility of individual road users to comply with road traffic laws, but builds upon this by adding layers of prevention and protection to account for human error.

To achieve Vision Zero, everyone has a responsibility to improve the parts of road safety that are under their influence. There will be a process of learning, planning and investment which is why Vision Zero is very much a long term aspiration.

Why we have adopted it:

Essex has seen a steady long-term reduction in deaths and serious injuries, but in recent years the rate of reduction has slowed.

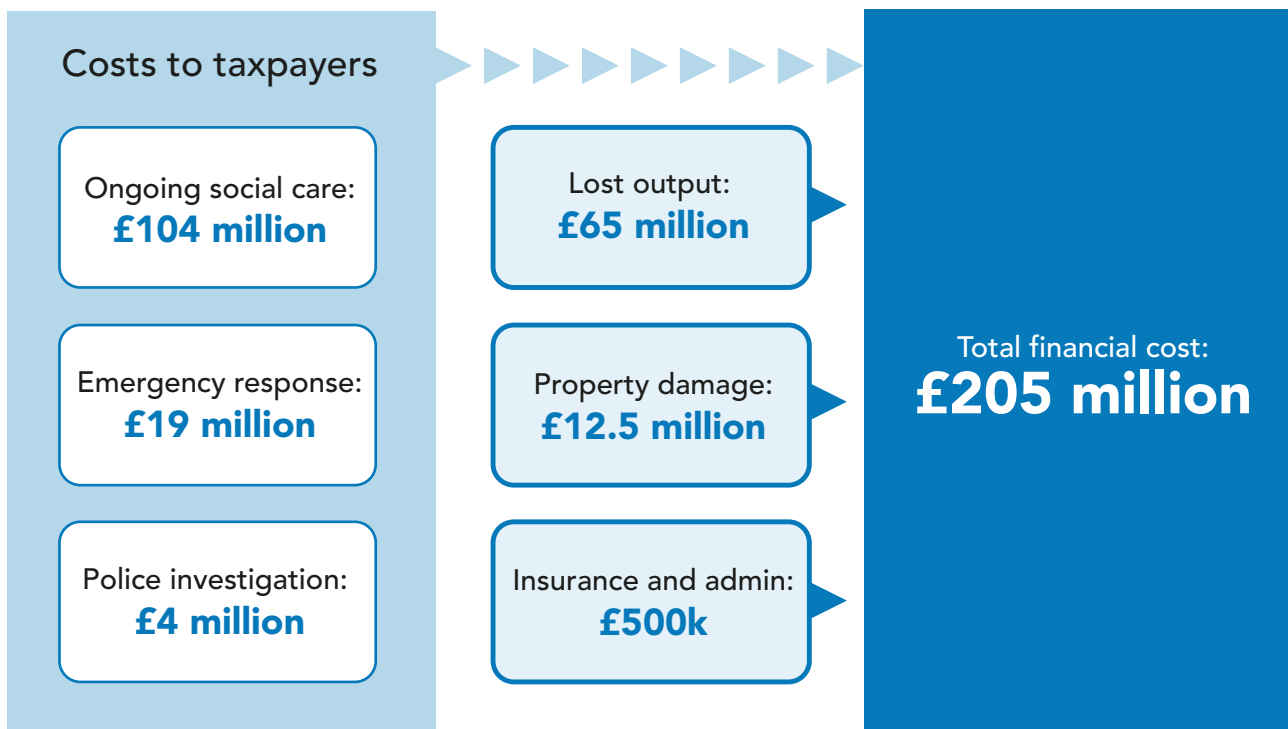
The Partnership believes that any death or serious injury on the roads is unacceptable and that Essex residents should not have to accept them as inevitable. Whilst current approaches to road safety have been very successful, the Partnership is focussed on delivering injury reductions that are sustainable in the long term. The involvement of multiple partners working together to deliver the safe system approach has a track record of delivering greater reductions in deaths and serious injuries than traditional road safety approaches.



Benefits:

- Preventing the 14,000 deaths and serious injuries that will occur by 2040 if the current rate continues.
- Preventing the heartache and distress of families being torn apart by the sudden unexpected trauma of a collision and its long-term consequences.
- Creating safer and more pleasant journeys for everyone, which may encourage more active travel.
- Reducing delays caused by collisions will reduce congestion, improve air quality and allow more reliable journey times for motorists.
- Reducing costs for businesses and taxpayers. On average, each fatality costs the economy over £600,000, each serious injury costs £110,000.

Annual cost of injuries in Essex



Challenges:

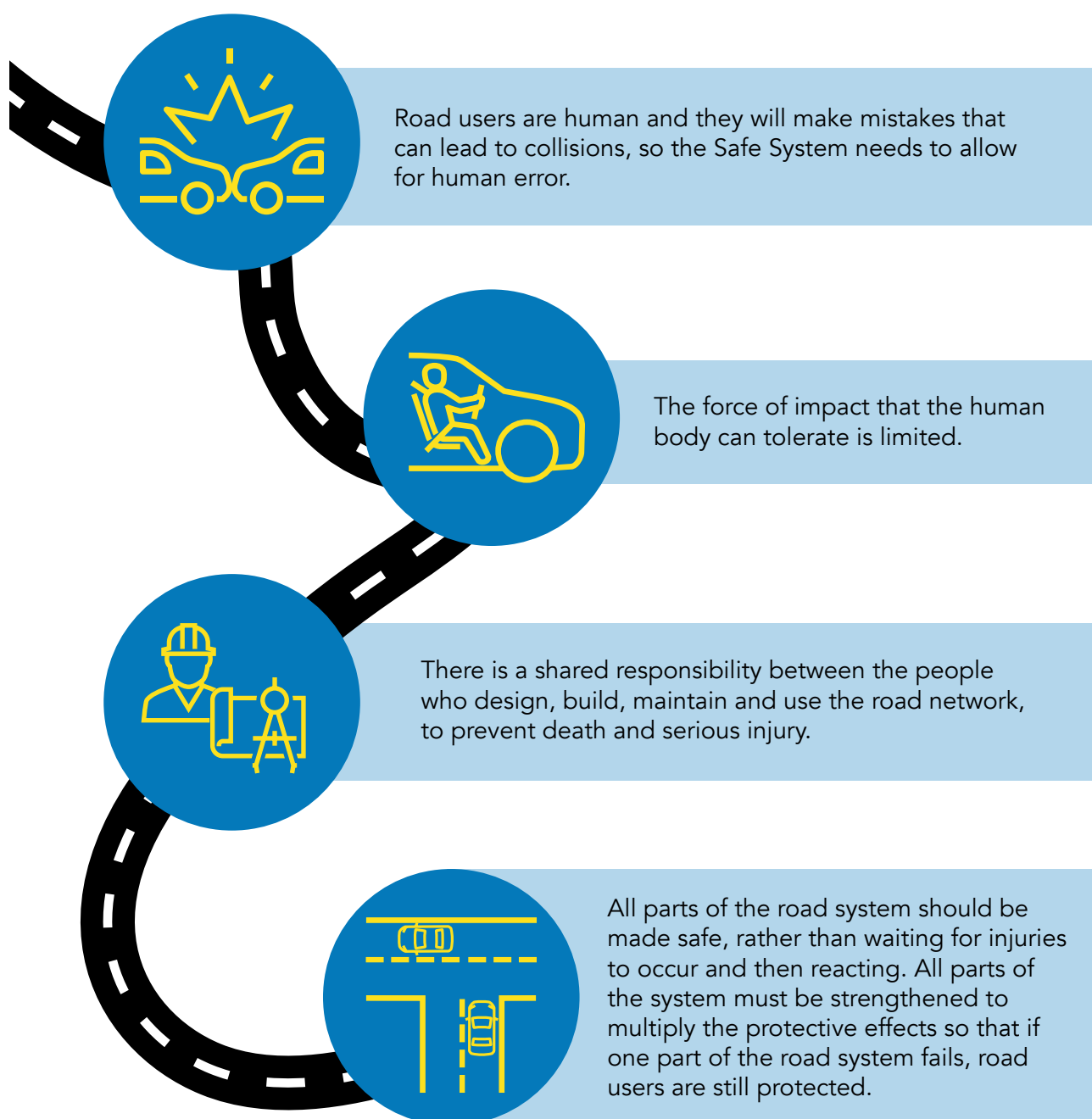
- It is widely believed that most of the 'easy wins' in road safety have already been achieved. The significant changes required for further improvements require prioritisation of investment in people, roads and vehicles.
- It will take time for all the different organisations involved to coordinate the necessary changes to build safer roads, encourage safer behaviours and for social values to evolve.
- There is widespread support for travel to become safer, so the real challenge is to coordinate the efforts of public authorities, businesses and individuals who want to make the changes that will deliver the safer roads everyone wants.



THE 'SAFE SYSTEM' HOW TO ACHIEVE VISION ZERO

The Safe System approach prioritises human life and health in the design, maintenance and use of the roads.

It accepts that humans make mistakes but also recognises death and serious injury does not need to be an inevitable price to pay for mobility. It is based on the following principles:



These principles require a forgiving road system that caters for the safety needs of all users. This system uses **the five layers of prevention and protection** illustrated below.



Safe speeds

- Vehicle speeds are at a level that make collisions easier to avoid
- Speed limits are set and enforced at levels that make death or serious injury unlikely for all road users



Safe vehicles

- Vehicles are always roadworthy
- Consumers demand the best safety features and understand how to use them



Safe road use

- Road users are competent, paying full attention and complying with the law
- Everyone is considerate and takes responsibility for other people's safety as well as their own



Safe roads and roadside

- Road design is consistent and easy to understand, encouraging safe behaviours
- Roadsides are forgiving of mistakes, with hazards removed or made safe



Post collision response

- Collision victims receive prompt and high standard medical care and rehabilitation
- Information about collisions is accurate and analysis informs decision making

GLOBAL RECOGNITION



The Safe System has been endorsed internationally as best practice in road safety, including by the UK Government, World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The OECD has produced a comprehensive document that discusses the Safe System approach to road safety. It has been adopted in Europe, Australasia and North America at regional, national and city levels, as well as by many organisations in the UK.

Wider benefits of the Safe System

Environment: Safe roads, that encourage walking and cycling, will reduce the numbers of motor vehicles that contribute to congestion and air pollution.

Active travel and leisure: Safer roads, that encourage walking and cycling, will mean more people can benefit from physical activity being part of their routine. The health benefits of being active already outweigh the risks from injury, and these injury risks are reduced further by the good quality infrastructure required by the Safe System.

Public health: In addition to the health benefits of more active travel and cleaner air, the Safe System will reduce the impact of death and serious injury on health and social care services. In the UK, 41% of accidental deaths and 11% of all deaths among 15 to 24 year-olds are from road traffic collisions.

Business: Around a third of collisions involve at least one person who was driving for work. Health and Safety at work legislation applies whether a person is working at fixed premises, a building site, or using the roads. It also applies both to employees and to the self-employed. Changes made by businesses to improve safety for their drivers, and for other road users, will protect the business's reputation and reduce costs incurred from vehicle damage, insurance premiums, lost trade, employee down-time and legal expenses.

IMPROVING CLIMATE



The Safe System will not happen in isolation; one of its strengths is that it contributes to other priorities such as economic health and reducing air pollution.

The Safe System offers more protection, especially for non-motorised road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. Other areas of public policy aim to make these modes of transport the default choice for short journeys in order to secure the benefits of reduced emissions, improved public health and human oriented public spaces. These aims are complemented by a safe system that reduces the perceived and actual risks faced by pedestrians and cyclists.



OUR STRATEGY – CREATING THE SAFE SYSTEM

Our full strategy document outlines the actions required to implement the Safe System for Essex, some of these are summarised below.

To implement the Safe System for Essex we will:

General:

- Ask each of the SERP partners to develop a plan to integrate Vision Zero and the safe system approach across their organisation's policies and activities, reporting progress to the Governance Board on a regular basis.
- Create expert working groups responsible for developing actions to make progress within each safe system layer of prevention and protection.
- Continue to use and share research, data and information to support decision making by the Governance Board and all partner organisations, allowing the best possible decisions to be made for the safety of people using the roads in Essex.

Speed:

- Support each highway authority to review how it sets speed limits to encourage safer road use by everyone.
- Work with Essex Police to develop and implement a strategy to explore a significant increase in speed enforcement.
- Continue to enhance speed limit compliance, using education, publicity campaigns and awareness raising activities, especially our School Speed Watch activities.
- Continue to invest in and grow our Community Speed Watch Scheme, recognising the importance of volunteer community support in delivering Vision Zero.



Road users:

- Promote compliance with road traffic laws as the most influential action that any road user can take to keep themselves and others safe on the road.
- Encourage and support employers to provide the safest possible vehicles for their employees and to have a robust driving for work policy as part of a positive road safety culture within their business.
- Continue to deliver a comprehensive programme of road safety education in schools and colleges that is regularly reviewed and evaluated.
- Provide information and advice to members of the public and specialised training to support those most at risk.
- Encourage more people to submit video evidence to Extra Eyes which can be used for prosecution purposes.

Communication:

- Inspire the people of Essex to support Vision Zero, providing information and advice to help everyone make a meaningful contribution.

Safe Roads:

- Help each partner highway authority to create a safe and forgiving road network that reduces the risk and severity of collisions. This will include developing a safety rating system for roads to inform investment decisions.

Safe Vehicles:

- Work with vehicle manufacturers to understand and promote safety features.
- Encourage anyone looking to change their vehicle to think about safety and to purchase a vehicle with the highest Euro NCAP safety rating available to them. We will also encourage the use of all safety features provided.
- Continue to remove unsafe and illegal vehicles from Essex roads.

Post collision response and care:

- Continue to work with the emergency services to understand what actions are required to improve outcomes for those injured in road traffic collisions.
- Promote ways for members of the public to communicate accurate information from the scene of a collision to the emergency services.



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VISION ZERO

NO ROAD DEATHS

Visit our website now to view the full strategy and see the latest information, stories and press releases.

saferessexroads.org/visionzero

PLEASE GET INVOLVED

- Learn more about safe road use on our website www.saferessexroads.org
- Like/follow/share on our social media channels [@saferessexroads](https://twitter.com/saferessexroads)
- Talk to family, friends and people in your community about Vision Zero
- Share ideas about how to make improvements where you live with your local elected representatives
- Subscribe to updates from us at: saferessexroads.org/subscribe-to-news-alerts
- Submit footage of road traffic offences to our Extra Eyes campaign: saferessexroads.org/driving-complaints-2020
- To share any ideas you have about how you might be able to help achieve Vision Zero in your community, please contact us at: SaferEssexRoads@essexhighways.org