

# A Safer Way: Consultation on Making Britain's Roads the Safest in the World

## Greater Manchester Cycle Campaign

### GMCC RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION :

1. *Do you agree that our vision for road safety should be to have the safest roads in the world? (Chapter 3)*

**Yes, but need clearer road safety targets linking KSI to Km travelled, because previous headline targets, based purely on the number of casualties, are totally incapable of determining how safe/dangerous our roads are.**

2. *Do you agree that we should define a strategy running over twenty years to 2030, but with review points after five and ten years? (Chapter 3)*

**Yes, but should also include a 15 year review.**

3. *Do you agree that our targets should be to reduce:*

- *road deaths by at least 33 per cent by 2020 compared to the baseline of the 2004–08 average number of road deaths;*
- *the annual total of serious injuries on our roads by 2020 by at least 33 per cent;*
- *the annual total of road deaths and serious injuries to children and young people (aged 0–17) by at least 50 per cent against a baseline of the 2004-08 average by 2020;*
- *by at least 50 per cent by 2020 the rate<sup>1</sup> of KSI per km travelled by pedestrians and cyclists, compared with the 2004–08 average? (Chapter 8)*

**We strongly support the inclusion of a target to “reduce the rate of KSI per Km travelled by pedestrians and cyclists”.**

**Reason 1 – As identified in this report, there is concern that increased levels of walking and cycling would lead to an increase in KSI to those users, therefore Local Authorities could be reluctant to encourage greater levels of cycling/walking for fear of litigation.**

**Reason 2 – Current road safety targets, based solely on the numbers of KSI, give a corrupt and false interpretation of road safety.**

**e.g. fewer KSI's amongst pedestrians / cyclists gives the impression that walking / cycling is safer, whereas the reduction in KSI's has largely been down to the general decline in levels of walking / cycling.**

**It is impossible to ascertain how safe / dangerous roads are, based purely on KSI figures. It is therefore imperative that KSI is linked to Km travelled.**

4. *We are proposing a set of indicators in order to help us to monitor performance (Appendix A). Do you believe these cover the right areas? (Chapter 8)*

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The final paragraph “Measuring progress on our vision” compares our safety to that of other leading nations by reference to the number of deaths per 100,000 population.

As mentioned earlier, it is impossible to judge road safety based purely on how many people are killed.

A true reflection of road safety (risk) would be to compare our safety record based on the number of deaths per Km travelled (broken down by mode), rather than deaths per 100,000 population.

5. *We have identified a number of factors that may affect our ability to deliver road safety improvements in the future world we are planning for. Do you think we have taken account of the key risks and opportunities? Are there others you would add? (Chapter 3)*

Health should also be a factor.

Increasing obesity, CHD, Cancer, Type 2 Diabetes and Depression are all affected by a sedentary lifestyle, and peoples concerns over the perceived dangers of walking and cycling have increasingly forced people to switch to driving (e.g. the school run).

By 2015, obesity is expected to cost the NHS alone £6.3 billion a year.

Apart from the huge financial benefits from increased walking / cycling, reducing the risk and in particular peoples perceived risk of cycling and walking would help promote a healthier, more active lifestyle, reducing major causes of death, both directly (through fewer road deaths) and indirectly (through improved health).

6. *We think that the key challenge for road safety from 2010 is better and more systematic delivery, rather than major policy changes. Do you agree? (Chapter 4)*

A key challenge for road safety is to improve the environment for non-motorised vehicles.

It is now clearly recognised that increasing levels of cycling also improves road safety, for example, over recent years London has seen significant increases in cycling whilst also achieving reduction in cycle casualties.

These achievements also have other implications for greater life expectancy and quality of life, through reduced pollution, reduced road danger, improvements in health.

A major change in policy should be a shift away from building more infrastructure (roads / car-parks) to accommodate more cars, and more emphasis on creating safe environments (e.g. home-zones, safe routes to school, area-wide 20mph speed limits) and better facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.

7. *This consultation document sets out the current evidence on the key road safety challenges. Do you agree with our analysis? Would you highlight any others? (Chapter 2)*

Road safety, and in particular the ‘perception’ of how safe road are, also affects other areas, eg health (CHD/Obesity/Type 2 Diabetese/Depression), pollution (effects on Health), Climate Change

Targets should take broader view, and include both costs to the community, and effect, and potential “life year” savings for the issues above.

Key challenge should be to create a safer environment for all users, inparticular pedestrians & cyclists, through schemes such as ‘home zones’, and not just target accident locations.

8. *We are proposing a number of measures to support the effectiveness of the road safety profession. Do you think they will be effective? What else might need to be done? (Chapter 4)*

**Currently there is no legal requirement on local authorities to discuss with local residents about both their Road Safety Strategies, and in particular local Road Safety Schemes.**

**Although road safety professionals may have a lot of knowledge on these issues, the real experts on the problems faced locally are the local residents affected.**

**This is particularly relevant to the fear of road danger, which does not appear in any road safety statistics.**

**There needs to be a requirement for local authorities to discuss with local residents about both local road safety strategies, and local road safety schemes, through consultation with the public on what problems there are in their area, and working with residents on the solutions.**

9. *Do you agree that an independent annual report on road safety performance, created on an annual basis, would be a worthwhile innovation? (Chapter 4)*
10. *Do you agree that the Road Safety Delivery Board should be tasked with holding Government and other stakeholders to account on the implementation of a new national road safety plan? (Chapter 8)*
11. *Do you agree that highway authorities reviewing and, where appropriate, reducing speed limits on single carriageway roads will be an effective way of addressing the casualty problem on rural roads? Are there other ways in which the safety of rural roads can be improved? (Chapter 5)*

**Fully Support - This is a big step in the right direction.**

**Even though average speeds may not reduce significantly at first, there will be some reduction in average speeds which will help reduce casualties (see section 7.5) and will also start to shift the perception of safety in favour of pedestrians and cyclists, which will encourage these groups to use the highway.**

12. *How can we most effectively promote the implementation of 20 mph zone schemes in residential areas? What other measures should we be encouraging to reduce pedestrian and cyclist casualties in towns? (Chapter 5)*

**We strongly support the widespread creation of 20 mph zones in residential areas.**

**Require all LA to review speed limits as part of the LTP process, with full consultation with local residents / user groups.**

13. *How can we provide better support to highway authorities in progressing economically worthwhile road safety engineering schemes? (Chapter 5)*

**Currently road safety schemes are prioritised by schemes that potentially save costs from reduced casualties. This severely restricts general road safety schemes by prioritising 'accident hotspots', which have done little to improve general road safety.**

**Little consideration is taken of indirect economic savings (better health, improved productivity, less pollution) that schemes to promote walking / cycling generate.**

**Experience from countries like Holland show that emphasis on 'Home-Zones' not only improve road safety, but have much wider social benefits.**

**Requiring Highway Authorities to include potential health, social and environmental savings from lower car use / increased walking cycling when planning road safety strategies would**

change the emphasis from “Road casualty reduction” to improving overall “Road Safety”.

14. *What should Government do to secure greater road safety benefits from vehicles?*

**Introduce speed restriction / black boxes within cars (as with lorries).**

15. *Do you agree that, in future, crash avoidance systems will grow in importance and will have the potential to greatly reduce casualties?*

**Do not necessarily agree – Improving motorists feeling of (in car) safety can lead motorists to take greater risks / drive more recklessly, in the belief that they will better survive an accident.**

**This in turn makes conditions outside the car more hazardous, for cyclists, pedestrians, horse riders along with other motorists.**

16. *How can we best encourage consumers to include safety performance in their purchasing decisions?*

17. *We have highlighted what we believe to be the most dangerous driving behaviours. Do you agree with our assessment?*

18. *What more can be done to persuade the motoring public that illegal and inappropriate speeds are not acceptable behaviours?*

**Care should be taking when running publicity campaigns. For example, the recent Think! Campaigns have produced some ‘thought provoking’ adverts in an effort to get motorists to think about their behaviour. Such adverts include the Kill Your Speed scene depicting a motorist breaking at 40mph in a 30mph area, and a child being thrown over the car.**

**Although these are primarily aimed at the motorist, they are also very disturbing to vulnerable road users, and in this case parents, and does little to give people confidence in allowing children to walk or cycle.**

**Similar concerns are experience by cyclists, with the pro-helmet campaigns encouraging helmet use by continually linking cycling with head injuries, brain damage and death. Understandably people are put-off cycling, thereby missing out on all the far greater health benefits of cycling.**

**Advertising campaigns should be more sensitive to the needs and feelings of vulnerable road users.**

19. *What more can be done to encourage safe and responsible driving?*

**Widespread 20 mph speed limits in all residential / urban areas.**

**Five types of irresponsible driving were highlighted in item 7.23: drink-driving; drug driving; speed; failure to wear a seatbelt; careless driving.**

**All these issues could be reduced in severity by reducing average vehicle speeds, e.g. a drunk driver is both less likely to have an accident driving at 20mph, and the severity of any accident would be reduced.**

**This affirms the importance to reduce speed limits and speeds on all residential / urban roads.**

20. *Should more be done to reward good driving? If so, what?*

**Provide a “no claims bonus” on VED for motorists with no convictions / penalty notices for speeding, drink-driving, drug-driving, careless driving or failing to wear a seatbelt.**

**Additional Comments:**

### **Section 7.39 - Single Double Summer Time**

**Given the obvious benefits in reduced KSI figures, we believe that the Government, through this strategy, should actively support a move to Single Double Summer Time.**

**Given that more northerly/westerly parts of the country, i.e. Scotland and Wales, have their own Parliaments, there is now little restriction for the whole of the UK to remain on the same timescales if each country want to go it's own way.**

**This change would also put us in line with our other major European trading partners, and more importantly, save 80 needless road deaths per year.**