

Annual Report

Road Safety Intervention Activity 2023-2024

Introduction

Through our Prevention Strategy 2022-2027, Prevention services and our structure for delivery was reviewed. This was done to ensure that we are delivering appropriately in line with our changing operating environment. We continue with a strategic focus on the quality of the services that we deliver around key themes: helping people to start safe, live safe; age safe, **be safe on our roads** and be safe in and around water, with a focus on working collaboratively with other organisations. As we move into the next financial year, the priorities of the thematic groups align to the Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP) 2022 – 2027 and Strategic Assessment of Risk.

Road Safe Thematic Group

During 2023 - 2024 the Thematic Road Safety Group continued to meet every quarter, with an option of both in person and virtual meets. We have membership from all areas of the county and a mix of Community Safety and Operational Staff. CFA Member and Road Safety Champion Cllr Ron Woollam has close links with the group and is in regular communication with the Prevention Support Officer for Road Safety.

A yearly plan aligned to the terms of reference has been developed alongside a priority work programme which supports the Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP) 'Towards Zero' strategy as described below. One of the ambitions of the group is to improve communication between strategic and practitioner levels and also to send clear messages out to areas with key road safety priorities. We want to deliver focused activities in areas identified as having issues and evaluate effectiveness.

Some of the working practices adopted during the Coronavirus Pandemic have now been adopted as business as usual and offer a greater choice of delivery methods for the community we serve, improving our reach and efficacy. Our offer of virtual delivery remains part of our plan and continues to be selected by schools as a delivery method across the county.

Lancashire Road Safety Partnership (LRSP)

Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service (LFRS) continue to be a pro-active member of LRSP and have representatives at both Strategic and Operational group level. The partners are working closely with each other and delivering the partnership strategy – 'Towards Zero' Lancashire: Road Safety Strategy for Lancashire 2016 – 2026', in an attempt to reduce those killed or seriously injured on our roads.

LFRS play a very active role in the Children and Young People workstream and the Powered 2 Wheelers workstream. The Joint Operations Group (JOG) brings partners

together to look at what is currently delivered, what works well and where the gaps are so that we can pool our resources to work effectively and without duplication.

The LRSP continue to work through the action plan following the review of the partnership completed in 2022. There has been significant change in the year 23/24 with the loss of both members of staff – the Coordinator and Manager. The Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner continued to hold the Chair with LFRS Area Manager Matt Hamer holding the position of Deputy Chair.

LFRS Road Safety Core Prevention Offer

1. Road Sense

Road Sense is the name given to the road safety education programme delivered to Year 6 pupils. It is a mixed session starting with a 20-minute fire safety recap then a 40-minute road safety input. This gives an opportunity to draw on a previous session the pupils will have received in Year 2 and explores the consequences of hoax calls and deliberate fires.

The package focuses on five key road safety themes which were selected to reflect Lancashire's issues with young people:-

- In Car Safety;
- Pedestrian Safety;
- Cycle Safety;
- Be Safe Be Seen;
- Bus Safety.

Our package has been adopted by Staywise, which is an online resource website for Fire and Rescue Services across the country.

Evaluation of the package has provided us with positive feedback from schools with 90% of teachers selecting they 'strongly agreed' the session was 'age appropriate.' The remaining 10% 'agreed' with this. 73% of teachers who responded said the 'strongly agreed' the session would positively affect pupils' behaviour with the remaining 27% selecting 'agree.' We have not received any negative feedback at all. Utilising the QR code allows the teachers to give more honest feedback and improves the efficiency of the process.

Here is an example of feedback received from teachers following a Road Sense delivery:

“The year 6 class were thoroughly engaged in this session. The information on fire and road safety was extremely useful. Great to link the session to the specific age of the class by talking about their journey to high school.”

“Very informative and knowledgeable delivery and information was relevant to our children and setting. Our children always respond better when information comes from experts with experience rather usual teacher.”

The Road Sense Fact Sheet continues to be popular, with a recent change being the inclusion of a QR Code for the pupils to fill in following a session. This will assist us to better evaluate the behaviour change effectiveness of the session as the pupils fill this in at home. Some examples the pupils have marked in the free text box:

“My most memorable safety message was to be careful when crossing roads because if you have headphones on while crossing you wouldn’t notice a car.”

“Never walk out on to a road without looking and always wear a helmet when you are riding a bike.”

There are 6 questions on the form, the correct responses range between 91% and 99% of answers. This is extremely positive that the pupils are retaining such a high percentage of the information they have received as the feedback is not always submitted on the day the session took place. To date the delivery figures are looking higher than ever before. During this reporting period 16,603 Year 6 pupils received this input, an increase of 1000 on last year’s figures.

2. ‘Wasted Lives’ Young Driver Road Safety Education Programme

LFRS is now the only delivery partner for Wasted Lives on behalf of LRSP. The programme is aimed at young and pre-drivers and aims to influence behaviour and change attitudes either as a driver or a passenger, thereby reducing risk to this specific group and to other road users.

By actively engaging with this age group (15 – 25-year-olds) Wasted Lives aims to maximise the opportunities for people to evaluate and reflect on their own attitudes and behaviour behind the wheel and as a passenger. Extensive evaluation has demonstrated how the package promotes real and lasting changes in how each participant behaves in a car. Since the introduction of Wasted Lives in 2010, LFRS has delivered road safety education to over 130,000 young people throughout Lancashire, Blackpool, and Blackburn with Darwen. For the period 2023–2024 LFRS has delivered the programme to 9,965 young people, mainly face-to-face delivery but with some virtual sessions. This is an increase of over 7,000 pupils compared to the last financial year. This is in part due to schools recovering from the pandemic and also an increase in the uptake of the newer assembly format.

We have developed a suite of assembly sessions which can be adapted in length to fit in with schools’ timetables. As we have developed different ways of working and we are now offering a short 15-minute virtual version of Wasted Lives during Road Safety Week. Schools now have 3 delivery options and by being more flexible in what we can deliver and how, we will be able to reach more young people. Whilst our focus is primarily on delivering in high schools, we have seen an increase in the number of requests for delivery to apprentice groups and colleges following the removal of Safe Drive Stay Alive through LRSP.

2000 students from Blackpool and Fylde College received the input on the run up to the Christmas break. The college did a short evaluation of the delivery and 95% of

students reported it had raised their awareness of not driving safely. They also provided some positive free text feedback:

“It got me to learn what not to do and what to do to drive safely. the presentation was great and the activity was good as I got to communicate on my opinions.”

The feedback from teachers also continues to be very positive with a similar theme about behaviour change and an engaging session being received:

“The delivery was pitched perfect for Y10 and Y11 students delivered in an engaging and professional manner.”

“Yes, absolutely relevant to the age group who can start to develop their own inaccurate and preconceived opinions at that age so it was really effective to have colleagues from real world situations to offer clarity and dispel myths. This will very much help keep them safe in the long term.”

2.1 The Crashed Car

The Wasted Lives package also has the option of being complemented by a ‘crashed car,’ which is a vehicle from a real incident where, tragically, there has been a fatality. Alternatively, the car can be used as a standalone resource at a community event. We have now completed a full year with Corey Hudson’s vehicle where the circumstances of his collision were solely speed related. He had no alcohol or drugs in his system, he made a wrong decision to speed which cost him his life. Coreys story has been very well received by communities across the county as most drivers recognise at some point in their driving career they have made a similar mistake. There were 2 passengers in the vehicle, neither were wearing seatbelts and both sustained serious, life changing injuries during the Road Traffic Collision (RTC). Due to their own decisions to not put their seatbelts on, they have not received substantial payouts from Coreys insurance. This very much strengthened the seatbelt safety message as it was a real example of poor decision making having lifelong implications.

In the 12-month reporting period the crashed car has increased in use at Mosques during Friday Prayers. In Central, Eastern and Pennine staff have worked alongside the Imam to deliver key messages prior to prayers and then deliver bespoke sessions to young people at the Madrassas. This activity has been increased around Ramadan where commonly high-powered vehicles are rented by young inexperienced drivers and shared amongst friends and family.

3. Safe Drive Stay Alive

Safe Drive Stay Alive is a road safety initiative where the audiences hear real life stories from the emergency services and families who have all been affected by road traffic collisions in an auditorium setting. This delivery is aimed at college aged students. It is currently on hold. Considerable work has been carried out nationally to compare a number of packages aimed at this age group and LFRS has been involved, alongside LRSP members, in evaluating the best fit for Lancashire.

4. Biker Down

Biker Down is a course that is aimed at motorcyclists and pillion riders of all ages and experience. The free 3-hour course offers members of the public a chance to learn practical skills which can be put into practice anywhere at any time. The three modules covered are:

- Incident Management
- First Aid
- The Science of Being Seen

The initiative started in Kent and LFRS has signed a memorandum of understanding with Kent Fire and Rescue Service to allow us to use the logo and delivery material.

LFRS has worked with LRSP to ensure the delivery is complementary to Bike Safe, which is a Police led initiative. Anyone who attends Biker Down is encouraged to book onto Bike Safe which is seen as the next step in training as it involves a ride out with an Advanced Police Motorcyclist. Biker Down is seen as the start of a motorcyclists 'learning journey.' During this reporting period there has been 146 motorcyclists killed or seriously injured (KSI). This is 14% of the total KSI figure. Lancashire's statistics showed you were 72 times more likely to die on a motorcycle than in a car on our roads, higher than the national average of 60. These statistics are very concerning as motorcyclists make up less than 1% of Lancashire's total road user population.

There have been 483 attendees in the last 12 months over 26 sessions. The appetite for the courses has grown significantly over recent months with the Facebook page reaching over 1,100 likes and the reach of posts sometimes exceeding 1500 people. All attendees take part in a practical element of the course which includes helmet removal and CPR. These are really important skills which may be needed should they be faced with a road traffic collision involving a motorcyclist. Feedback from attendees mirrors how important this part of the course is and how valuable they felt it was. Below are a few examples:

“Great course, been attending first aid courses for over 50 years, the rules change, really pleased to learn how to remove helmet”.

“Having been a first aid instructor for 8 years I still learnt new skills especially the removal of a helmet.”

The pre and post questionnaire maintains very positive feedback about the behaviour change impacts of the session. 1 of the questions the attendees are asked is around their confidence to remove a motorcycle helmet following a road traffic collision. The scale they use is 1-5 (1 not confident – 5 very confident). Prior to the session the average rating is 2.4 but increases to 4.7 following the session.

With support from Cllr Ron Woollam, a portion of the CFA Road Safety Champion budget was utilised to provide all attendees with a First Aid kit that complements the skills they are taught.

The delivery model is flexible so courses can be hosted for individual motorcycle clubs or advertised using an online booking platform for members of the public to book on independently. The Biker Down team aim to run 12 courses per year but are currently far exceeding that aspiration due to such a high demand for courses.

5. Alive to Drive Events

Alive to Drive is a long-standing road safety event initiative. The event initially started as a partnership between LFRS and Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) in Chorley 15 years ago. Since its inception the event had grown from strength to strength and the partners who attend have grown. During this reporting period 4 events took place in South Ribble, Preston, Blackpool, and Blackburn. These events are free to members of the public and allow them an insight as to what happens at an RTC. There is an RTC demo at each event which involves LFRS, Police, North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) and National Highways. The events were very well attended and 2 of the events made national press. The South Ribble event was used to launch 'Project Edward' - Every day without a road death and Alive to Drive on the Prom in Blackpool made both BBC and ITV news. As well as looking to educate members of the public of all ages and road user types there is particular emphasis based on signing young drivers (17-25yrs) up to the Institute of Advanced Motorists Course at a reduced rate, partly funded by LRSP. The plan for these events next year is to run 1 per geographical area due to the success and high attendance. The partners involved include Police, Lancashire County Council (LCC), NWAS, National Highways, IAM, South Lancs Advanced Motorcyclists, Blood Bikes, Mountain Rescue, Tyre Safe, Pro Tyre, Fresh Drivers, Blackburn with Darwen Council, Blackpool Council and Wincanton.

Summary

This 12-month period has been a really positive period for Road Safety Education and our ability to engage with the communities of Lancashire. Many schools are now out of the 'recovery' period loosening constraints on their timetables. We have continued to adapt our offerings and, with increased use of technology and innovative ideas by members of the Road Safety Thematic Group, this has meant that we have delivered our education packages to over 30,000 people, an increase of 11,500 last year.

We continue to be an active member of the LRSP and, building on the review, look forward to continuing to be involved in a collaborative approach. This will have an emphasis on the strengths that our brand as a Fire and Rescue Service can bring to the partnership as we work to deliver our collective ambition of a safer road system.

Focusing on our priorities for 2023/24, we have achieved some notable progression and successful outcomes, from getting back into primary schools' post-pandemic to engage with pupils and deliver our improved Road Sense package to re-launching Wasted Lives and Biker Down. Our action plan for the forthcoming year builds on this. The figures have significantly improved, and we will continue to build on this successful year.

Over the next 12 months we will be focussing on further evaluation of all our Road Safety initiatives, campaigns, and educational packages. This evaluation will look at 4 distinct areas; Is our targeting correct and appropriate, are we delivering according to end user expectations, are we influencing a positive behaviour change and are we delivering value for money (i.e. for every £1 spent on prevention what does that save in terms of prevention of an incident). We will also look to refresh all the education packages over the summer of 2024 to ensure a fresh approach for the new academic year.