

# Sussex Safer Roads

P A R T N E R S H I P

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## Sussex Safer Roads Partnership

The Sussex Safer Roads Partnership (SSRP) was established in 2007 to positively influence driver behaviour. The partnership works pan Sussex and includes Brighton and Hove City Council, East Sussex County Council, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, Highways England, Sussex Police and West Sussex County Council (including West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service).

Our vision is to improve road safety across Sussex and reduce casualties and their severity, with particular focus on reducing the number of those Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI). We strive to strengthen our partnership through maximising opportunities for collaborative working and by aligning our activities to improve road safety through; education, engineering, engagement and enforcement.

Since 2013, when all grant funding for road safety cameras ceased, the partnership has been self-funded the one exception to this is partner member's time. The overriding benefit of partnership working, in the road safety environment, is the strength it gives to meeting our mutual goals through; shared ownership, resilience, joint delivery, integration, broader access to skills and economy of scale amongst many others.

The partnership coordinates a range of road safety activities which are complementary to the partner agencies core roles and responsibilities. In addition to these activities the SSRP is responsible for the effective delivery of the safety camera enforcement within the area. This work includes the administration and delivery of the driver awareness courses, sighting and engineering of fixed cameras and deployment of mobile enforcement.

Our 3 year plan, which will be re-set in 2020, outlines our key priority groups. These are underpinned by strong analysis, based on our shared goals and reflective of our specific demographics. Our current priority groups are; **Young car drivers (16-24)**, **Powered two wheelers**, **Occupational drivers**, and **Vulnerable road users including cyclists and pedestrians**. Activity to reduce the risk towards our priority groups are reflected in all of our 4 delivery areas of education, engineering engagement and enforcement:

To maintain as effective as possible the partnership strives to evaluate all of its activities to ensure they deliver the greatest road safety benefits against the priorities. Individual projects have clear evaluation criteria and are subject to rigorous in year monitoring. To support this our partner leads have all undertaken evaluation courses. It is widely acknowledged that many road safety interventions are difficult to evaluate, this is in part due to; scarcity of events, identification of contributory factors, variable exposure to risk, and the limitations of data, for this reason professional judgement is also a primary factor used to complement the formal evaluation

## **Education**

Education is a key element in improving driver behaviour and reducing and casualties. We undertake work across all age ranges and risk groups but maintain a specific focus on young

people. As described our interventions are under constant review and evaluation to ensure we provide best value for our limited funds.

To improve the safety of young drivers and young pedestrians we work with the Theatre in Education group - **Box Clever** to deliver an interactive show aimed at year 11 students. The show follows three characters on an interactive journey with the audience. The story highlights challenges and dangers discovered by a novice driver as well as further exploring in car safety and also raises wider road risks. The programme reaches 37 schools and 6,620 students a year.

The Box Clever intervention is complementary to an earlier intervention we deliver in year 7 with theatre group **Performance in Education**. We target this intervention towards 40 schools in the higher road risk locations. The educational show focuses on developing safer attitudes when walking to and from school and when near traffic. Through the programme we also encourage PSHE teachers to take up Road Safety education resources for KS3. The programme reaches over 6000 students a year.

As young people begin to start driving we make a further intervention at year 12 through the highly acclaimed **Safe Drive Stay Alive** show. These performances are organised and run by the Fire Service with Police, NHS, Ambulance service personnel together with people directly affected by road death. Each presenter gives an account of their experiences dealing with casualties and the outcome from a fatal collision. This thought provoking performance encourages students to take responsibility for their driving and to do the right thing if they are a passenger. The programme reaches over 10,000 students per year.

In addition to the education interventions we take for young people we also deliver the following education based activities to the wider public.

Aimed at motorcyclists (powered two wheelers) but equally useful for other road users we deliver **National Bike Safe**. This is a one day workshop with a combined class room and on road practical education. Riders are given guidance by Advanced Police Motorcyclists and instructed in safer riding techniques. 14 courses are delivered each year.

**Biker Down** is organised and led by the Fire Service. This free 3 hour workshop uses the expertise of the Emergency Services and HSE qualified First Aid Trainers to prepare motorcyclists should the worst happen on the roads. Biker down works equally well for equestrians and other motorists alongside bikers.

In Case of Emergency (**ICE**) is a scheme which provides information essential personal contained on a sticker which is fixed on a rider's helmet. When the bar code on the sticker is scanned medical teams are immediately provided with essential medical and personal details allowing for effective treatment. This intervention is particularly popular with motorcyclists but is also used by cyclists and equestrians. This programme reaches over 500 per year.

Aimed at new drivers the partnership also delivers a **New Driver Awareness** interactive session which embraces a Virtual Reality (VR) system. This is a new programme which we are currently developing.

## **Engineering**

The partnership brings together the core agencies responsible for engineering interventions to collectively consider what activities are most likely to achieve success in improving road safety. Whilst many of the large scale gains in road safety through intelligent design and improving road infrastructure have been made by Highway Authorities, there remains some scope for improvement where evidence indicates these will be most effective. In support of this the SSRP analytical team provide ongoing assessment of road risk to the partners and undertake in-depth reporting to highlight specific risks.

Where changes in road design, road restriction (e.g. speed limits) or other engineering interventions are considered the partnership approach has proven invaluable in understanding what would work best. This collective approach has ensured a better assessment is undertaken and helps to identify more subtle approaches which can reach the same outcome more economically. We recognise that remaining engineering works on our network are now often high cost solutions and public expectations on the viability of such schemes need to be managed, the partnership provides the best structure to do this.

In addition to road engineering new technology has been adopted and deployed by the Safety Camera Team, examples include; fixed speed, mobile speed, average speed and traffic signal enforcement. Following the camera replacement programme completed this year we are now utilising newer digital camera technology, this provides significant efficiencies in the processing and disposal of speed and signal infringements. Our automated enforcement programme is an essential road safety intervention, we will continue to maintain and further develop our effective network in line with NPCC (National Police Chiefs' Council) guidelines.

## Engagement

Effective communication provides an excellent opportunity to reach wider groups and influence behaviour thereby reducing risks. We seek to promote all safety activities undertaken by partners and provide information on how everyone using the road can do so in safer ways. Alongside traditional media, leaflets, and literature we fully embrace social media, virtual reality and other more modern communication routes. The partnership also maintains a comprehensive website which has in addition to 200,000 visits a year.

To promote our communication products and to directly deliver the road safety guidance we work together to attend key public events. We utilise an array of media platforms and interact with specific interest groups to promote our activities. In addition to the ongoing campaign work over the last 12 months the partnership has also been working with the Governments Behavioural Intervention Team. Through a set of ground breaking projects we are working across a range of interventions aimed at nudging people to change their behaviour to become less risky. The programme of work will report in 2020.

Through our engagement channels the partnership also promotes national and international campaigns such as the **National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Calendar**. These campaigns are aimed at coordinating activity and highlighting relevant safety interventions on a wider scale. Examples of this work includes; the Christmas and Summer 'Driving Under the Influence' activity, Mobile Phone campaigns, Tyre Safety Month and Speeding campaigns.

In addition to the NPCC intervention we also closely focus our targeted activity on the **NPCC 'fatal Four'**. These four factors of; Distraction, Driving under the Influence, Speeding and

Failing to wear seat belts are very closely associated with the highest number of crashes and the most serious injuries to those involved.

Together with National campaigns we also engage with the European Traffic Police Network TISPOL. **Op Edward** is an example of that work and is a campaign for a day without a road death, our Facebook engagement reached over 18,000 people and Twitter reached over 14,000 during the day last year.

In support of our priority group of Occupational Drivers the partnership have embraced **Driving for Better Business** (DFBB). The aim of this important work is to inform employers, managers and drivers of their responsibilities with regard to work related road safety. The scheme provides employers with risk assessment advice and guidance on how to manage their transport arrangements to reduce casualties and costs. We work on this intervention with our partners from the Highways Agency who take the lead. To date the campaign has over 14,000 followers.

In response to vulnerable road users we undertake the following activities.

**Safe Pass;** Cyclists and equestrians continue to be one of our higher risk groups. To improve their safety, intervention is taken on the street to highlight the space motorists need to give cyclists and equestrians when passing. In addition reports collected from close passes of cyclists submitted through our Operation Crackdown portal are followed up with guidance and advice and where necessary enforcement. Over 50,000 people have been reached on social media this year to promote this work.

**Exchanging Places**, this initiative allows cyclists to get behind the wheel of a large vehicle such as a HGV or bus to see what the driver is able to see and where the blind spots are. The initiative also utilises a 'blind spot mat' which cyclists and/or riders can use to give a visual representation of what can be seen. This work regularly sparks conversation with riders about where they should be positioned on the road. Over 1,000 people have attended our interventions this year

**Step Up** is an intervention with year 6 students through an interactive leaflet providing guidance about pedestrian safety, here we have undertaken over 16,000 interventions. **Be Bright Be Seen** is a campaign which highlights the use of bright and reflective clothing for pedestrians and cyclists during November, this campaign reaches over 3,600 people.

**Community Speed watch** provides a unique opportunity for the partnership to work with local people to tackle issues of speeding through their villages and towns. Sussex leads this community based approach to what is a common complaint nationally. Within our area we currently have over 240 groups operating, there are 1500 volunteers and we send more than 37,000 advisory and educational letters per year.

**Op Crackdown** is a portal where the public can report instances of anti-social driving and abandoned vehicles. Each report is assessed for the most appropriate intervention and action taken. Over 55,000 reports are received per year and over 44,000 interventions are taken, this includes personal visits by police officers, prosecutions and educational letters.

## **Enforcement**

Whilst pro-active education and campaigning through engagement have increasing roles to play in sustained behaviour change, enforcement remains essential to the delivery of the partnership objectives. Maintaining a high visibility presence on the Sussex road network is vital, we always aim to take early action against drivers who fail to adhere to legislation to improve safety and reduce the likelihood of reoffending.

A major element of the Partnerships work is to support and promote the use of safety cameras on the roads of Sussex. Alongside the fixed speed and traffic light cameras the partnership also deploys a fleet of mobile enforcement vans. Together with that mobile enforcement newer technology helps to support our work and broaden our areas of intervention, for example to; reduce the distraction caused by mobile phone, reinforcing the importance of wearing seatbelts, maintaining a suitable distance from the vehicle in front and other cases of careless driving. We will continue our work with manufacturers to develop and target new technologies to improve our enforcement capability and improve casualty reduction outcomes.

A positive outcome of enforcement is that it provides the police with the opportunity to offer eligible offenders a diversion course, under the National Driver Offender Retraining Scheme (NDORS), as an alternative to prosecution. We will continue to deliver NDORS courses as part of the case disposal process and together with other appropriate enforcement measures we will continue to evaluate their success. The revenue which the courses generate is used to administer the scheme and targeted towards the overall vision of the SSRP to improve road safety and reduce collisions.

Last year our enforcement activity detected over 67,000 offences, all of which were formally responded to. Of those offences over 27,500 resulted in people attending a speed awareness course. In addition to speed awareness the partnership also delivers over 3,500 other awareness courses, these include education intervention in response to careless driving, failing to wear seat belts and following a crash. Recent research (Mori 2018) has statistically showed that the National Speed Awareness Course has a positive ongoing effect on improving the safety of attendees and is thereby a key element of the partnerships work.

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January 2020