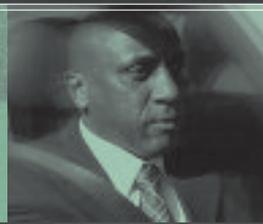


4



The Green Flag Report on Safe Driving **PART FOUR**

A Risky Business



 **Brake**
the road safety charity
www.brake.org.uk


Green Flag
motoring assistance

Mary Williams OBE, Brake's chief executive, says: "Driving is one of the most dangerous things most of us do on a regular basis. Because driving is, for many, an every day activity, it is all too easy to forget the dangers we face and the risks we pose to others.

The startling reality is that one in 200 of us will end our lives on the road and yet, as this report demonstrates, many of us are unaware of the risks.

There are about 9 deaths every day on UK roads – the equivalent of an aeroplane with 126 people on board crashing over this country once a fortnight, killing everyone on board.

In this report, Brake and Green Flag Motoring Assistance examine 1,009 drivers' attitudes towards the risks of the roads. It looks at their perceptions of their own and others' driving abilities, what types of transport and what types of road they feel safest on, how much care they take, and whether they worry for the safety of themselves, passengers and other road users. The report includes case studies of crashes and statistics and Brake's advice on how we can all reduce the risks we face.

Because road deaths are an every day occurrence, and because deaths on our roads often happen in ones and twos, road safety is rarely given the same high-profile media coverage as other 'disasters' such as rail or plane disasters. In addition, safety features that help to protect drivers and passengers can also create a false sense of security. Drivers may feel cocooned in their vehicles and fail to bear in mind that their actions can lead to the death or injury of themselves, their passengers and other road users. It is common to hear a traffic report about delays because of a road crash, or to see a mangled vehicle by the roadside, but fewer people have actually seen the mangled bodies inside, or experienced the trauma of hearing that a loved one will never come home.

This report exposes widespread misunderstandings among drivers of risks on roads and calls for more education of drivers on this critical topic. We hope it will act as an 'eye-opener' for drivers and for Government officials responsible for educating drivers.

If we can properly educate drivers about the risks they face, it can only help to encourage safe driving."



Hillary Williams, Director of Marketing and Public Relations Green Flag Motoring Assistance, says: "As a company with safety at the core of its operation, we are committed to supporting a range of road safety initiatives, aimed at drivers and vulnerable road users. We also support a range of road safety initiatives, including funding important research to gain a better understanding of the issues and the strategies needed to reduce needless fatalities and serious injuries on our roads. We also focus on providing awareness training for the very young through a pre-school education scheme run by Brake and we have been a headline sponsor of Road Safety Week for the past five consecutive years.

The findings of the various studies carried out into driver behaviour over the past two years will be compiled into a second edition of the Green Flag Report on Safe Driving. The first report, launched in 2001, sought to gather the opinions and identify the behaviours of various driver types. The second edition of the report will again focus on key issues affecting motorists and challenge their views on safety. The gap between studies will allow us to highlight changes in opinions over time and indicate potential trends.

This mini-report compiled by Brake delivers a strong message about how many of us as drivers view dangers on the road and assess our exposure to risk. Most of us would say that we are safe drivers and present minimal risk to other road users. However, this self-image and other perceptions are challenged by the findings of this study.

The report encourages us to carry out a degree of self-examination and reflect upon how we view our driving and how much of a danger we present to ourselves, our passengers and other road users.

We endorse the issues raised by Brake and the recommendations they make to Government. However, we are strong advocates of personal responsibility and urge drivers to seek to change their driving behaviour. Only by re-examining our driving style and re-assessing the obvious risks of driving, can we protect lessen the tragedy of serious incidents."



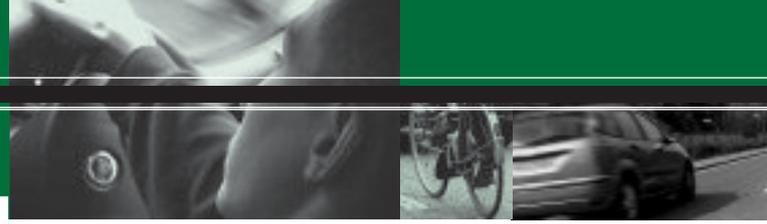
About this report

This report is the fourth in a series of eight reports that make up the Green Flag report on Safe Driving 2004-7. The first three parts were: *Fit to Drive* (driver impairment – through drink, drugs or tiredness); *Speed* (speed on different types of road, overtaking and speed enforcement); and *Are you ready to drive?* (driver tuition and skills, crash protection and vehicle maintenance). All reports are available from Brake by calling 01484 559909.

Forthcoming reports include:

- Driven to distraction
- Road safety and the law
- Young drivers
- Driving for work

This report is based on a survey carried out by Brake volunteers across the UK in 2005. The volunteers questioned a cross-section of drivers and riders in a variety of locations, including: villages, town centres and motorway service stations; in homes and workplaces; and in locations such as public libraries, supermarkets, pubs and doctors' surgeries. Every effort was made to ensure that a wide variety of people responded. The sample group included drivers and riders of all types of vehicle, and people who drove mainly for work, as well as those who drove mainly in their free time. Brake thanks all volunteers who helped conduct the survey and collate the results.



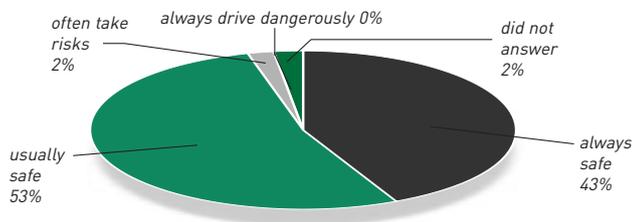
Who's a safe driver?

Q1: Within the past 12 months, how safe do you think your driving has been?

Drivers have a high opinion of their own safety behind the wheel. Almost all respondents (96%) think they are always or usually safe drivers. Less than 3% say they often or usually drive dangerously. Yet 15% of those who said they were usually or always safe had received points on their licence within the past 12 months.

- 43% think they are always safe
- 53% think they are usually safe, but take risks occasionally
- 2% often take risks
- 0% think they always drive dangerously
- 2% did not answer

Figure 1: Within the past 12 months how safe do you think your driving has been?

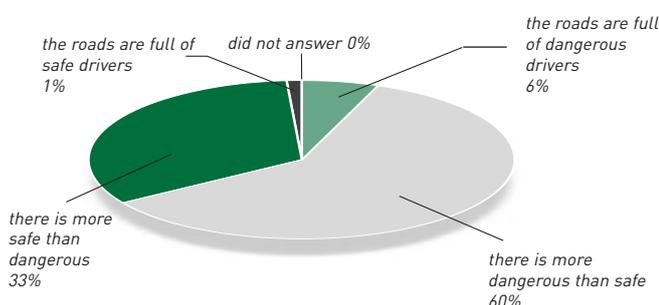


Q2: Thinking about the behaviour of other drivers, within the past 12 months, what is your perception of the standard of driving on roads?

Drivers have a much worse opinion of other drivers than of themselves – suggesting they think it is ‘other drivers’ who cause crashes. The majority of respondents think they are usually or always safe drivers (96%), yet nearly two-thirds (66%) also think that there is more dangerous driving than safe driving on UK roads. Just 1% think there are hardly any dangerous drivers.

- 6% think the roads are full of dangerous drivers and there are hardly any safe drivers
- 60% think there is a mixture of safe and dangerous driving, but more dangerous than safe
- 33% think there is a mixture of safe and dangerous driving, but more safe than dangerous
- 1% think the roads are full of safe drivers and there are hardly any dangerous drivers

Figure 2: Thinking about the behaviour of other drivers, within the past 12 months, what is your perception of the standard of driving on roads?

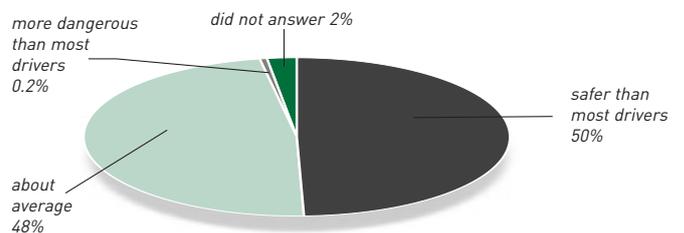


Q3: How do you think the safety of your driving compares with that of an average driver on roads today?

As demonstrated in the results of questions 1 and 2, many drivers regard themselves as superior to others. Nearly all respondents (98%) think they are as safe, or safer than, other drivers. Only 2 respondents admitted to thinking they are more dangerous.

- 50% think they are safer than most drivers
- 48% think they are about average
- 0.2% think they are more dangerous
- 2% did not answer

Figure 3: How do you think the safety of your driving compares with that of an average driver on the road today?

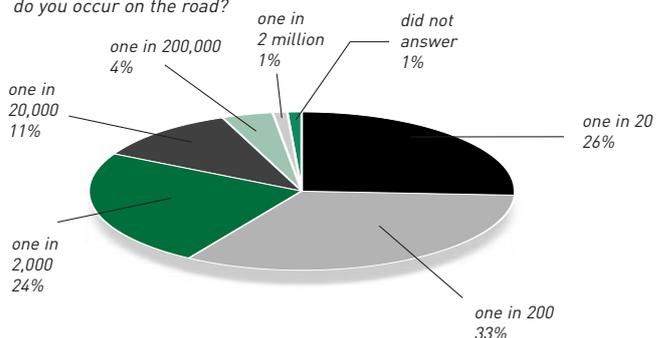


Q4: As a proportion of all deaths that happen in the UK, how many deaths do you think occur on the road?

Being aware of risks is crucial to driving safely. One in 200 deaths in the UK happen on the road. Yet only one-third (33%) of respondents know this. More than four in ten (41%) think the risk of dying on the road in the UK is much less – they think it is between 10 and 10,000 times lower than it actually is. Perhaps surprisingly, given the lack of national media coverage following most road deaths, a quarter (26%) think 1 in 20 people die on roads (10 times more than is actually the case). These answers suggest widespread confusion about the extent of death and injury on the road, despite the fact that the ‘1 in 200’ figure is printed on the back of the Highway Code.

- 26% think one in 20 people die on roads
- 33% think one in 200
- 24% think one in 2,000
- 11% think one in 20,000
- 4% think one in 200,000
- 1% think one in 2 million
- 1% did not answer

Figure 4: As a proportion of all deaths that happen in the UK, how many deaths do you occur on the road?



THE FACTS – DEATHS AND INJURIES ON ROADS

- Up to 1 in 200 deaths each year are, on average, road deaths.
- In 2003, there were 596,726 deaths of all causes in Great Britain (latest figures available).
- 3,508 of these were road deaths.
- This means that 1 in 170 deaths in 2003 were road deaths.
- The previous year, 1 in 169 deaths were road deaths.²

Casualties on UK roads in 2004:

- There were 3,368 fatalities.
- There were 32,313 serious injuries which include life changing injury such as paralysis and brain damage.
- There were also 254,666 slight injuries.³

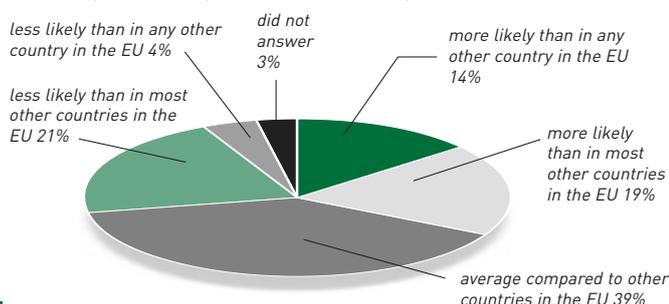
Q5: Children are vulnerable on roads. Thinking about children when they are on foot in the UK, what do you think their chances are of dying on the roads, compared to child pedestrians in other European Union (EU) countries?

The child pedestrian death rate in the UK has historically been much poorer than many other EU countries. Although the UK's performance, in recent years, has become average for EU states, it is still, shockingly, twice as high as the countries with the lowest child pedestrian death rate, such as Denmark.⁴

A quarter (25%) of respondents think child pedestrians are less likely to die on UK roads than in most or any other EU country, revealing a lack of awareness of the problem of children's vulnerability on UK roads. Four in 10 respondents (39%) thought, correctly, that a child's chance of dying on foot in the UK was about average for children across Europe. A third (33%) thought UK children are more likely to die on foot than children in most or all other EU states. These answers reveal confusion on the subject.

- 14% think they are more likely to die than in any other country in the EU
- 19% think they are more likely to die than in most other countries in the EU
- 39% think they have an average chance of dying, compared to other countries in the EU
- 21% think they are less likely to die than in most other countries in the EU
- 4% think they are less likely to die than in any other country in the EU
- 3% did not answer

Figure 5: Children are vulnerable on roads. Thinking about children when they are on foot in the UK, what do you think their chances are of dying on the roads, compared to child pedestrians in other European Union (EU) countries?



THE FACTS – CHILD CASUALTIES ON FOOT AND BICYCLES

- The UK's child pedestrian death rate is twice that of some other Western European countries, such as Denmark.
- In the UK, traffic is the second biggest single killer of children aged 5-14 after cancer.
- More children and young people (excluding babies) are killed by traffic than all other so-called 'accidental' causes such as fire, drowning, poisoning and falls put together.⁵

On UK roads in 2004:

- 177 children under 16 were killed, including 80 on foot, and 26 on bicycles.
- 3,879 children suffered serious injuries including brain damage, paralysis, loss of limbs or other injuries that change lives forever.
- More than twice as many boys under 16 were killed on foot than girls - 54 boys died compared to 26 girls.
- Nearly a third (32%) of pedestrians killed or seriously injured were under 16.⁶
- In England and Wales, traffic is the biggest killer of people aged 15-24, due mainly to young and inexperienced drivers taking risks on the road when behind the wheel, often killing their young passengers at the same time.⁷
- In Great Britain, the fatality rate (number killed per 100,000 population) among drivers aged under 20 is more than two-and-a-half times that of the fatality rate among drivers of all ages. The fatality rate among car passengers aged under 20 is more than five times the fatality rate among car passengers of all ages.⁸

LOST LIVES

Martin Balmer, aged 14



Martin Balmer (pictured right), was killed on 1 April 2005, aged 14. He was hit by a motorbike while crossing at traffic lights on a 30mph road near his home in Bermondsey, South London. He was thrown 67 feet by the impact and died later in hospital. Martin left behind a twin and eight other brothers and sisters.

LOST LIVES

Kristine Errington, aged 12



Kristine Errington was killed on 6th June 2003, aged 12, while walking on a pavement with her sister Leanne, aged 14, and two other friends. They were on their way to meet Kristine's mother, who was taking the girls to see a boy band. A 24-year-old driver in a BMW crashed into the girls and rolled down an embankment. Kristine suffered head injuries and died 36 hours later in hospital. Leanne survived, but suffered head and shoulder injuries.



ADVICE FOR DRIVERS – LOOKING OUT FOR CHILDREN

No matter how tightly a parent holds onto a child's hand, there is always a risk that the child could break free and run onto the road. It will always be the case that children make mistakes, and as they move up to secondary school it is less easy for parents to 'always be there'. It is up to drivers to watch out for children as they learn their road awareness or, in the case of many teenagers, when they forget to follow their Green Cross Code.

- Slow down to 20mph or lower in areas where children are likely to be about, such as in towns and villages, around schools and residential areas.
- Look out for danger 'hot spots' such as parked cars or crossing places.
- Do you know your stopping distances? At 20mph it takes 12 metres to stop. At 30mph it takes 23 metres. Slow down to 20 or lower.⁹
- Do you know the chance of killing a child at different speeds? Hit at 40mph, there's around an 85% chance they'll die. Hit at 20mph, there's around a 95% chance they'll survive.¹⁰
- On rural and urban roads, watch out for bends, particularly left hand bends. Presume that there is a child who has fallen off a bicycle round the bend and slow down before the bend, so you could stop in time.

Do you fear for your safety?

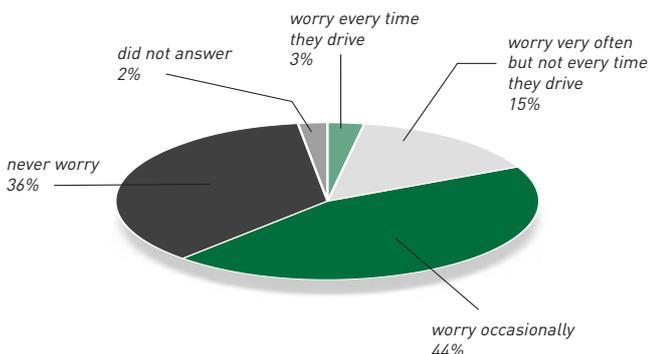
Q6: Do you consciously worry about being killed while driving?

More than a third (36%) of drivers say they never worry at all about being killed while driving, suggesting that about 11,600,000 drivers in Great Britain are complacent about the risks of the road.¹¹

Nearly two-thirds (62%) of respondents do worry about being killed while driving, but more than two-thirds of these only worry 'occasionally'. Only 3% of drivers worry every time they drive.

- 3% worry every time they drive
- 15% worry very often but not every time they drive
- 44% worry occasionally
- 36% never worry
- 2% did not answer

Figure 6: Do you consciously worry about being killed while driving?



Which are the most dangerous roads?

Q7: When do you MOST worry about being killed while driving?

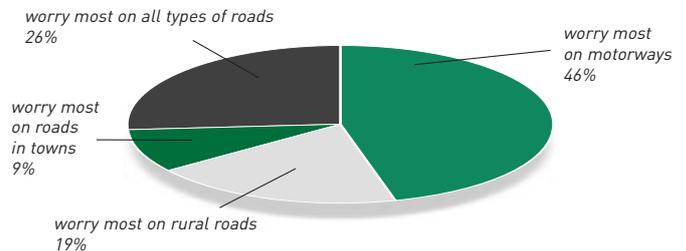
The majority of vehicle occupant deaths occur on non built-up roads (not including motorways) – often in high speed head-on collisions when overtaking, or when trying to take a bend unsuccessfully, or at a junction. In 2004, 1,216 vehicle occupants were killed on rural roads, compared with 480 killed on built up roads and 129 killed on motorways.¹²

Of the 625 respondents who DO worry about being killed while driving [see question 6], nearly half (46%) are – misguidedly – most worried about dying on motorways. This suggests they are unaware that they are least likely to die on these roads, or, perhaps more likely, they have particular 'scares' on these fast roads that enter their 'consciousness' (for example, they are cut up by a driver doing 90mph in sheeting rain, or notice a lorry veering out of lane).

Out of the 625 respondents who worry about being killed:

- 46% worry most on motorways
- 19% worry most on rural roads
- 9% worry most on roads in towns
- 26% worry on all types of roads

Figure 7: When do you MOST worry about being killed while driving?

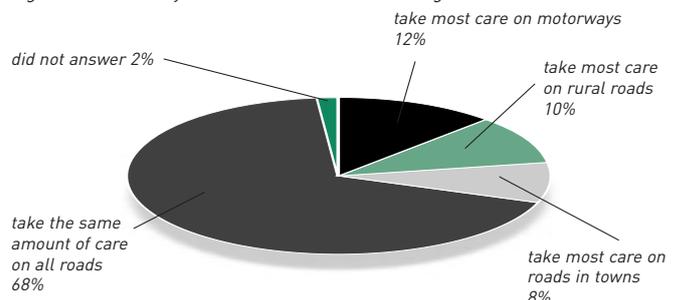


Q8: Where do you take most care when driving?

Just over two-thirds of respondents (68%) take the same amount of care on all roads they use. Slightly more respondents say they take better care on motorways than on rural or urban roads, again suggesting respondents worry when travelling on motorways.

- 12% take most care on motorways
- 10% take most care on rural roads
- 8% take most care on roads in towns
- 68% take the same amount of care on all roads
- 2% did not answer

Figure 8: Where do you take most care when driving?

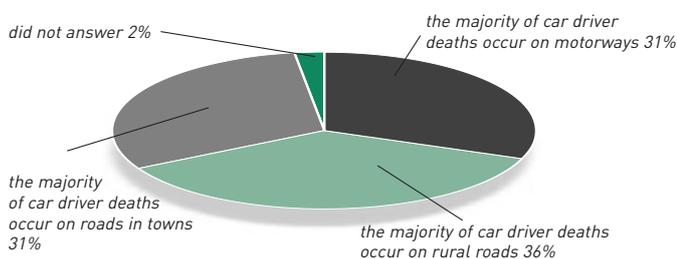


Q9: On what type of road do you think the majority of car driver deaths occur?

Nearly two-thirds did not know that car drivers are more likely to die on rural roads than on motorways or in towns. In 2004, 58 car drivers died on motorways, 268 in towns, and 778 on rural roads.¹³

- 31% think the majority of car driver deaths occur on motorways
- 36% think the majority of car driver deaths occur on rural roads
- 31% think the majority of car driver deaths occur on roads in towns
- 2% did not answer

Figure 9: On what type of road do you think the majority of car driver deaths occur?



LOST LIVES

Katie Evans, aged 21



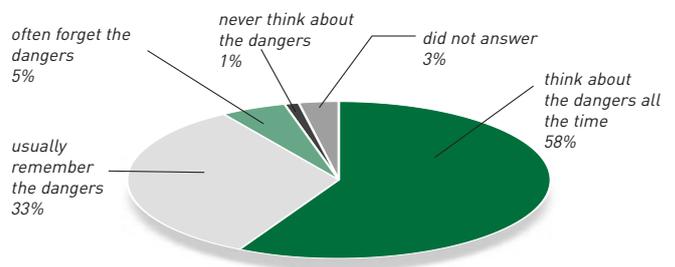
Katie Evans was killed, aged 21, while being driven home from a 21st birthday party with her friend Chris in 2004. The driver lost control of the car on a bend on a rural road and the car hit a tree, splitting in two. Katie was killed instantly, her friend Chris suffered spinal injuries and the driver sustained head injuries.

Q10: When driving on rural roads, how frequently do you think about the dangers of hitting other road users, such as cyclists or pedestrians hidden round left hand bends or vehicles coming in the opposite direction?

Cyclists, pedestrians, motorcyclists and horse riders are extremely vulnerable on roads compared to vehicle occupants, who have crumple zones, airbags and seatbelts to help absorb the force and protect them in an impact. Drivers have a responsibility to be on constant alert and drive as though a vulnerable road user could appear around any bend, particularly left hand bends, or a vehicle could be coming in the opposite direction. Yet more than a third (39%) say they often or sometimes forget the dangers of hitting other road users on rural roads, suggesting that about 12,600,000 million drivers may not be taking enough care on rural roads.¹⁴

- 58% say they think about the dangers all the time and are on constant alert
- 33% say they usually remember the dangers but sometimes forget
- 5% say they often forget the dangers and imagine the road ahead will be clear
- 1% never think about the dangers and drive as though the road is a personal race track
- 3% did not answer

Figure 10: When driving on rural roads, how frequently do you think about the dangers of hitting other road users, such as cyclists or pedestrians hidden round left hand bends or vehicles coming in the opposite direction?

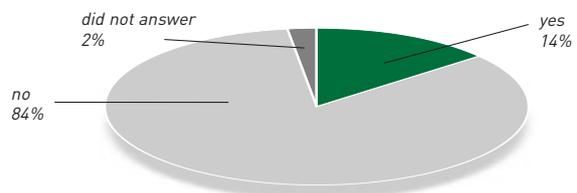


Q11: In the past 12 months, have you overtaken on a rural road when you couldn't be certain what was on the road ahead?

Overtaking on rural roads without checking the road ahead is completely clear of other road users is the cause of many fatal head-on collisions. Yet more than one in seven respondents (14%) have engaged in this high-risk, dangerous manoeuvre in the past twelve months.

- 14% say they have overtaken when they couldn't see what was on the road ahead
- 84% say they have not
- 2% did not answer

Figure 11: In the past 12 months, have you overtaken on a rural road when you couldn't be certain what was the road ahead?



ADVICE FOR DRIVERS – SAFE DRIVING ON RURAL ROADS

Many fatal high speed crashes on rural roads are caused by drivers taking bends too fast or overtaking in dangerous places.

Go very slow on sharp bends. Presume a bend is sharp if you don't know. Follow any 'speed guidance' signs and watch out for bend warning signs.

Never cut corners or follow the 'racing line'. You may hit a vehicle coming in the opposite direction. This is particularly critical if you are on a motorbike.

If you want to overtake, ask yourself 'Why am I doing this?' and check your speedo. It may be that the vehicle in front of you is abiding by the speed limit, and you are planning to overtake it in order to break the limit. Relax and keep your distance from the vehicle in front – at least two seconds in dry conditions, longer in the wet or on ice.

Only ever overtake on a long, straight stretch so you can be 100% certain the road ahead is clear, you can overtake within that distance, without going too fast for the conditions, and without breaking the speed limit.

Ensure you check your rear-view mirror before making your move – it may be that a vehicle behind has the same idea and you will collide with it.



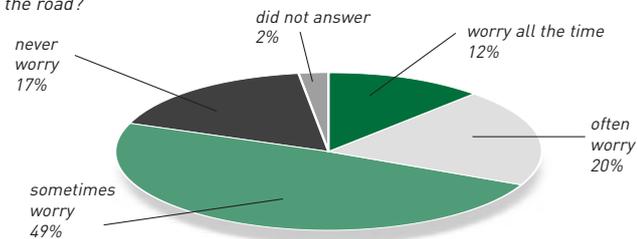
Do you fear for the safety of others?

Q12: Do you consciously worry about the people you love being killed on the road?

The majority of respondents (81%) worry about a loved one being killed on the roads, considerably more than those who worry about their own safety (see Q6). However, a significant proportion of drivers - more than one in six (17%) - never worry about people they love being killed on the road.

- 12% worry all the time
- 20% often worry
- 49% sometimes worry
- 17% never worry
- 2% did not answer

Figure 12: Do you consciously worry about the people you love being killed on the road?

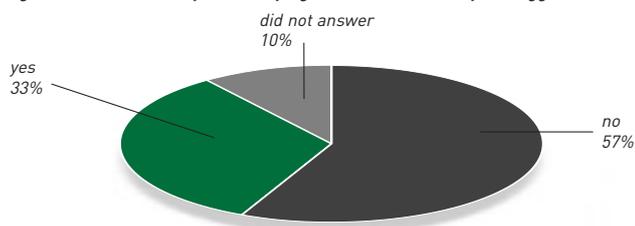


Q13: Is someone you love dying on the road one of your biggest fears?

One-third of respondents feel that a loved one dying on the roads is one of their biggest fears, around the same number as those who worry all the time or often about a loved one being killed on the road (see Q21).

- 57% answered no
- 33% answered yes
- 10% did not answer

Figure 13: Is someone you love dying on the road one of your biggest fears?



Q14: When you are on foot, do you consciously worry about being hit by traffic?

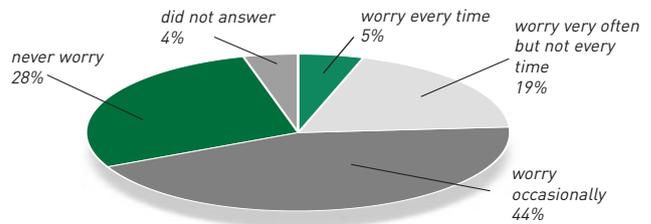
Given air bags, crumple zones, and the high level of comfort in most cars these days, it is perhaps unsurprising that people are much more conscious of their vulnerability when on foot than while driving. More than two-thirds (68%) worry about being killed when on foot, 10% more than are worried about being killed when in cars.

- 5% worry every time
- 19% worry very often but not every time
- 44% worry occasionally
- 28% never worry
- 4% did not answer

THE FACTS – PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- In 2004, 694 pedestrians were killed in the UK. 6,997 were seriously injured and 27,935 slightly injured.¹⁵
- In Great Britain, in 2004, 59 pedestrians were killed and 743 seriously injured on pedestrian crossings, refuges and central islands. 62 pedestrians were killed and 686 seriously injured within 50 metres of a pedestrian crossing.
- Older pedestrians are particularly vulnerable, as they are often less able to survive the horrific injuries that can occur when hit by a moving vehicle than younger pedestrians. In Great Britain, the fatality rate (number killed per 100,000 population) among pedestrians aged 70 – 79 is nearly twice the fatality rate among pedestrians of all ages, and for pedestrians aged over 80, the fatality rate is more than three-and-a-half times the fatality rate among pedestrians of all ages.¹⁶

Figure 14: When you are on foot, do you consciously worry about being hit by traffic?



LOST LIVES

Five pedestrians die in collision with bus



Five people were killed and three injured when a bus driver mistook the accelerator on his bus for the brake. He hit and injured a pedestrian, drove through red lights and hit a car before mounting the kerb in holiday resort Ingoldmells. Five pedestrians, including two young children, one of whom was in a pushchair, were killed. The driver, Stephen Topasna, 51, of Louth, Lincolnshire, was jailed for five years.

BBC Online, 9 November 2005
Daily Express, 10 November 2004

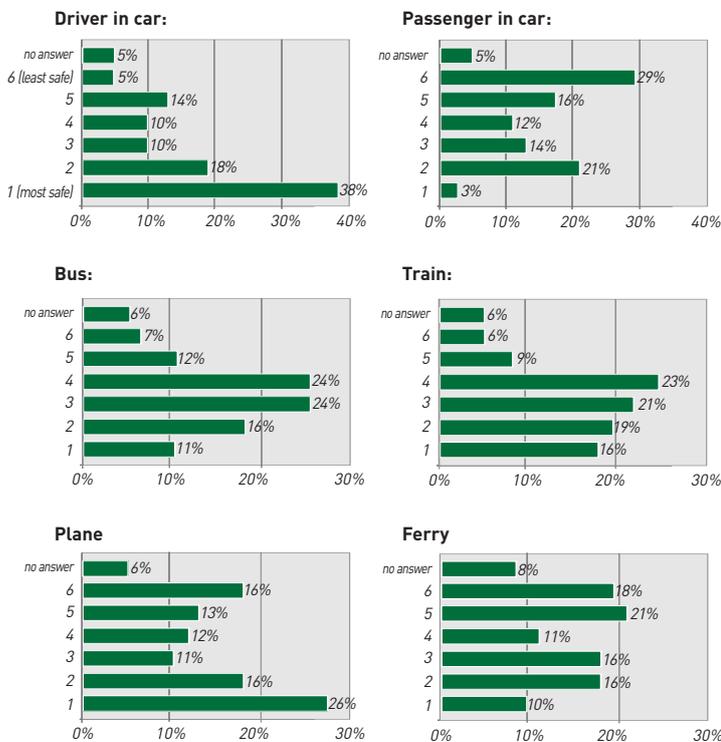


Train, bus, plane or car?

Q15: Rank these transport modes according to how safe you FEEL when you are using them, with 1 making you feel safest and 6 making you feel least safe.

Drivers are fooling themselves into feeling safe in their cars. Although you are far more likely to die in a car than on any other mode of transport, drivers feel safer behind the wheel than on planes, trains or buses, perhaps because they feel more 'in control'. 38% of respondents say driving a car makes them feel safer than any other mode of transport. That's more than twice the number that feel safest on a train and nearly four times the number that feel safest on a ferry.

However, only 3% feel safest as car passengers, suggesting an inflated sense of confidence in their own ability to control their own safety when driving, and a mistrust of other drivers.



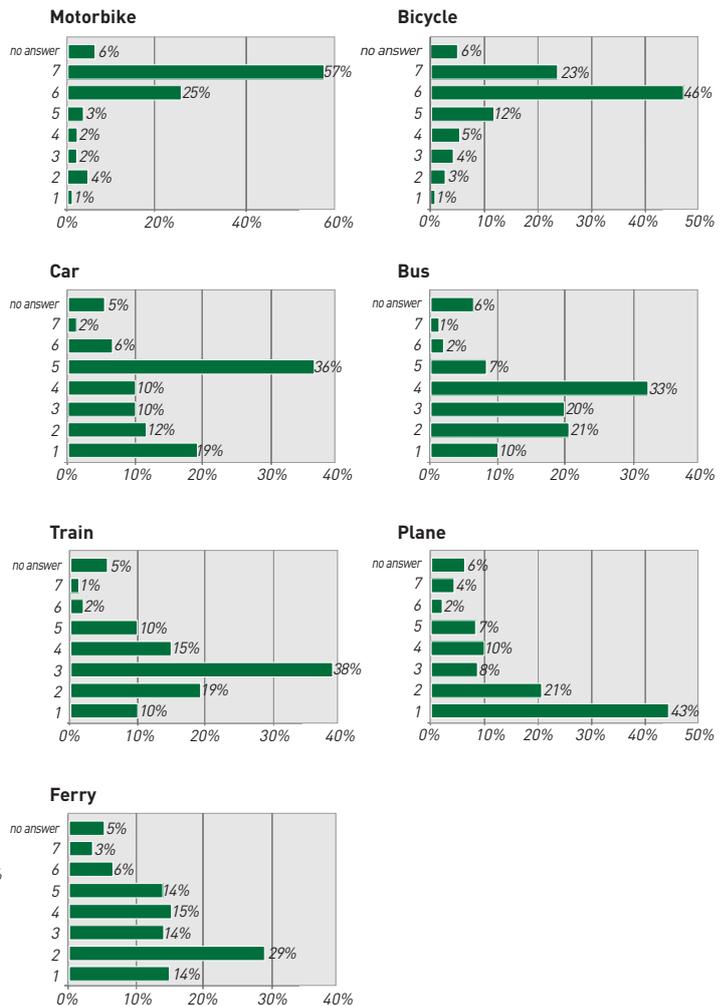
Q16: Rank these transport modes according to how safe you think they ACTUALLY are, with 1 being safest and 7 being least safe.

Fascinatingly, many of those who answered in the previous question that they felt safest when driving, acknowledged that this isn't actually the safest transport mode, suggesting that many drivers know they are duping themselves into feeling safe while driving.

However, although more respondents (43%) picked air as the safest transport option than any other transport option, one-fifth (19%) still answered that they thought the car is the safest – nearly double the number that picked trains as the safest (10%). In fact, the chance of dying on a train is tiny compared to your chance of dying on the roads.

People's perceptions of safety may be affected by what they see in the media. When there is a rail disaster there is widespread media coverage. When there is a disaster on the road it is far less likely to hit the headlines. This is because fatal road crashes happen with such frequency (9 deaths a day on average), and they usually kill only one or several people. This affects their 'newsworthiness' compared with a rail disaster that kills 40 people, but happens rarely.

People correctly recognize that two wheels are less safe than four. Nearly six in ten (57%) respondents picked the motorbike as the least safe mode of transport, followed by the bicycle (picked as the least safe by 23%).



THE FACTS – ROAD V RAIL AND AIR

Many more vehicle occupants die per km travelled than rail and air passengers combined.

Car occupants are 27 more likely to be killed per km travelled than air and rail passengers. In 2003 (most recent available figures), occupant fatality rates (per billion km travelled) among different modes of transport were:

- 2.7 among car occupants;
- 1.0 among van occupants;
- 0.2 among bus and coach passengers (excludes drivers);
- 0.1 among air and rail passengers combined (excludes drivers).¹⁷

THE FACTS – MOTORCYCLISTS

Bikers have the highest fatality rate per km travelled of all road users.

- They are 37 times more likely to be killed per mile travelled than car occupants and three times more likely to be killed than cyclists. Bikers make up only about 1% of traffic but account for 19% of deaths and serious injuries on our roads.¹⁸
- In Britain in 2004, 585 people were killed on motorbikes or mopeds, 6,063 were seriously injured and 18,993 slightly injured.¹⁹
- In Northern Ireland in 2004, 22 people were killed on motorbikes, 151 were seriously injured and 324 were slightly injured.²⁰
- That's 19 bikers killed or seriously injured every day in the UK.

LOST LIVES

Adam Wall, aged 24



Adam Wall was killed while riding his motorbike, aged 24, in 2002. He was travelling along a straight road when a van driver came out of a junction and hit him. Adam was left in the middle of the road. The driver got a paltry £180 fine and six points on his licence.

LOST LIVES

Nicholas 'Jeff' Parish, aged 37



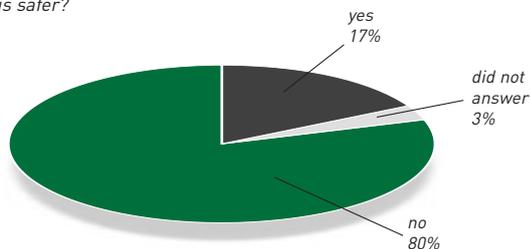
Nicholas Jeff Parish, aged 37, was killed in 2000 while on his motorbike. He was hit by a lorry pulling out from a side road. Nicholas was a keen snowboarder. He left behind a 13 year-old son, Thomas, a mother and large family.

Q17: Do you ever make a decision to use a transport mode because you think it is safer?

The vast majority of respondents (80%) fail to take safety into consideration when deciding what mode of transport to use – despite nearly two-thirds saying they fear for their lives when driving and one-third saying that one of their biggest fears is a loved one being killed on the road.

- 80% answered no
- 17% answered yes
- 3% did not answer

Figure 17: Do you ever make a decision to use a transport mode because you think it is safer?

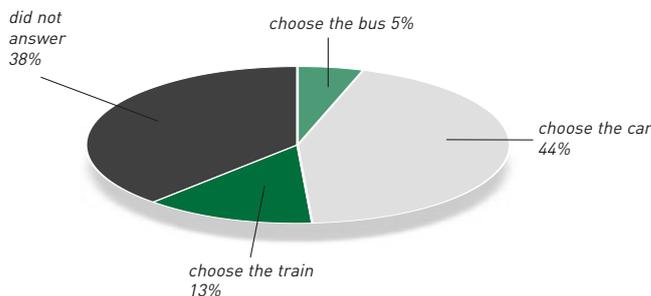


Q18: What is your most commonly chosen transport mode for safety reasons?

Out of those who answered 'yes' to Q.17, nearly half (44%) said they chose the car rather than other forms of transport for safety reasons – despite the fact that you are most likely to die in a car.

- 5% choose the bus
- 44% choose the car
- 13% choose the train
- 38% did not answer

Figure 18: What is your most commonly chosen transport mode for safety reasons?



ADVICE FOR DRIVERS – CHOOSING THE SAFEST OPTION

Driving a car is one of the most dangerous things most of us do on a regular basis. You may often decide to take the car, but you should always consider the options first. Choosing another mode of transport saves the environment, as well as increasing your safety.

If your journey is for work purposes, is it absolutely necessary?

With careful planning it may be avoided altogether. For example, it may be just as effective and far more time-efficient to hold a meeting via the phone, email, or even video conferencing. If the journey is absolutely necessary, can it be made via train? This may also be quicker and cheaper and would allow time to work. Most trains have lap top power points these days.

Have you tried commuting by public transport?

If you regularly drive to work, why not try it by public transport one day, and see if it's possible? If you live just a mile or so away from work, why not consider jogging or walking to work once a week – you might find that you build up to doing it every day as your fitness levels improve.

If you're holidaying in the UK, look up public transport options

and consider letting the 'train take the strain'. For families, it can be a lot of fun traveling somewhere by train or bus – kids love them, and rail companies offer discounts for families. There is also a lot of concern about the environmental damage being caused by hundreds of cars parking up in 'beauty spots' such as the Lake District. It is possible to catch a train to the Lakes, and then take 'hopper' buses around the Lakes, particularly in the peak season.

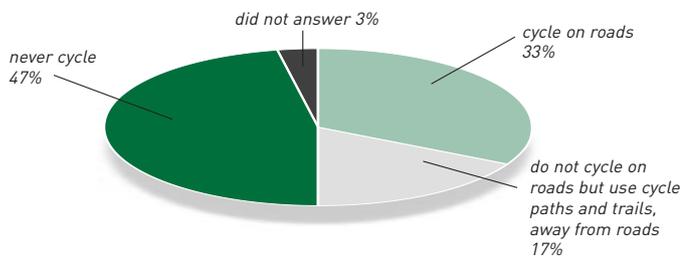
Choosing to cycle

Q19: Do you ever cycle on roads?

Nearly half (47%) of respondents never cycle. Of the 508 respondents who do, the majority (66%) say they cycle on roads, while 34% only cycle away from roads on paths and trails. A third (34%) of those who cycle on roads think 'there are more dangerous than safe drivers' (see Q2), suggesting many cyclists are braving roads despite a heightened level of concern about levels of dangerous driving.

- 33% cycle on roads
- 17% do not cycle on roads but use cycle paths and trails, away from roads
- 47% never cycle
- 3% did not answer

Figure 19: Do you ever cycle on roads?

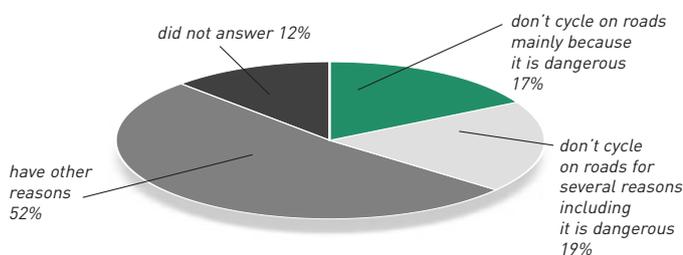


Q20: Is your decision not to cycle on roads because you think it is dangerous?

Many people are being put off cycling – a healthy, environmentally-friendly transport option – because of their perceptions of danger. One in three (36%) of the 645 respondents who never cycle on roads do so for reasons including a fear of traffic.

- 17% don't cycle on roads mainly because it is dangerous
- 19% don't cycle on roads for several reasons, including it is dangerous
- 52% have other reasons
- 12% did not answer

Figure 20: Is your decision not to cycle on roads because you think it is dangerous?



THE FACTS – LEVELS OF WALKING AND CYCLING

- Bicycle use in Great Britain is decreasing. The average number of bicycle trips made per person per year has fallen by a sixth from 18 in 1992/1994 to 15 in 2004.
- The proportion of cars on the school run has almost doubled in the past twenty years and in urban areas in term time it accounts for nearly one in five cars on the road at 8.50AM. (Department for Education and Skills)

THE FACTS – LEVELS OF WALKING AND CYCLING (CONT)

- A shocking 40% of primary pupils and 20% of secondary pupils are now driven to school.
- More than half (53%) of journeys by people aged 16 or younger are made as car passengers, compared to 35% on foot and 2% on bicycle.
- 63% of journeys made by all age groups are in cars, compared to 25% on foot, 2% on bicycle and 2% by train.²¹

ADVICE FOR CYCLISTS

Cyclists are vulnerable road users who don't have the advantage of a car's protective cage around them. To minimise the risks:

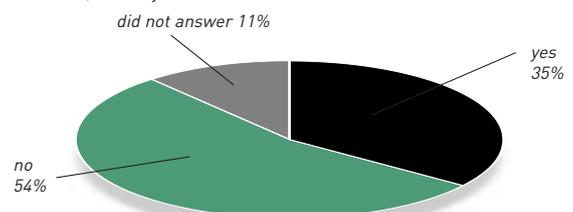
- Use off-road cycle paths where provided.
- Always wear a helmet. Make sure it fits properly (read the instructions) and hasn't been damaged. While a helmet may not save your life if you are hit head-on at high speed, it could save your life in many situations, for example, if you were knocked off your bike and your head hit a wall or the ground.
- Always wear a high-visibility vest when on a road, with fluorescent and reflective strips. Wear it day AND night. If you drive as well as cycle, you will appreciate the difference that a 'visi-vest' can make to a cyclist's visibility on the road at any time of day, particularly as our days can be so murky for much of the year.
- Read the Highway Code and undertake formal cycling training before taking to the road on a bike for the first time or with little experience.

Q21: If there were more cycle paths and trails connecting your home to local amenities, would you choose to ride a bike on them?

More than a third (35%) of the two-thirds (64%) of respondents who answered that they do not cycle on roads would use cycle paths to travel from home to local amenities if they were available, suggesting that more off-road facilities for cyclists would make a big difference to people's transport choices.

- 35% answered yes
- 54% answered no
- 11% did not answer

Figure 21: If there were more cycle paths and trails connecting your home to local amenities, would you choose to ride a bike on them?





THE FACTS – CYCLIST CASUALTIES

- In 2004, 134 cyclists were killed on Britain's roads – one every 3 days. This was an increase of 18% from 114 in 2003.
- A cyclist is 13 times more likely to be killed on an urban road than a car occupant, per km travelled. On a rural A road, a cyclist is 33 times more likely to be killed than a car occupant, per km travelled.
- 2,174 cyclists suffered serious injuries in 2004.
- That's six cyclists killed or seriously injured every day.
- 14,340 cyclists also sustained minor injuries in 2004.
- One in five cyclists killed or seriously injured are under 20. ²²
- In Northern Ireland, 2 cyclists were killed, 27 seriously injured and 131 slightly injured in 2004. That's one cyclist hurt or killed every two days. ²³

LOST LIVES

Matthew Orr, aged 10



Matthew Orr was killed while riding his bike near his house in Belfast in 2002. He was on a country road with a 60mph speed limit, when a 4x4 jeep came round the corner and knocked Matthew off his bike. He died at the scene. The driver was not charged.

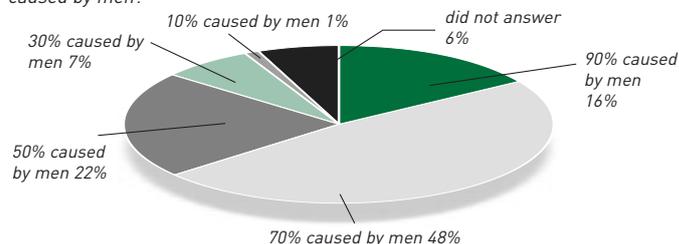
Q23: What percentage of deaths by dangerous driving do you think are caused by men?

Most respondents (64%) correctly thought that men were responsible for 70% or more of deaths by dangerous driving. However, only 16% of respondents correctly guessed that 90% of all deaths by dangerous driving are caused by men. (In 2003, 94% convictions for causing death by dangerous driving were against men). ²⁴

Nearly one in 3 (30%) respondents think, incorrectly, that men are responsible for the same or fewer deaths by dangerous driving than women.

- 16% think 90% of deaths by dangerous driving are caused by men
- 48% think 70% of deaths by dangerous driving are caused by men
- 22% think 50% of deaths by dangerous driving are caused by men
- 7% think 30% of deaths by dangerous driving are caused by men
- 1% think 10% of deaths by dangerous driving are caused by men
- 6% did not answer

Figure 23: What percentage of deaths by dangerous driving do you think are caused by men?



Men versus women

Q22: Who do you think are the most dangerous drivers? Men or women?

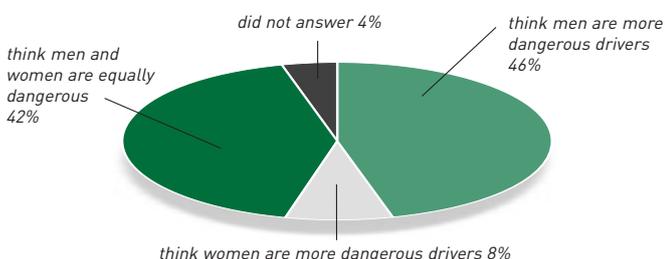
Nearly half (46%) of respondents think that men are more dangerous drivers and only 8% think women are more dangerous. However, 42% of respondents think both sexes are equally dangerous as drivers.

In fact, while women are responsible for some fatalities on roads, nearly all dangerous driving convictions are against men. Women are much more likely to make low-risk mistakes (for example, stalling at junctions) and men are much more likely to make high-risk mistakes (for example, overtaking when there is something coming in the other direction).

Out of the 42% who said both sexes were as dangerous as each other, 59% were men. Out of the 46% who said men were more dangerous than women, 51% were men.

- 46% think men are more dangerous drivers
- 8% think women are more dangerous drivers
- 42% think men and women are equally dangerous
- 4% did not answer

Figure 22: Who do you think are the most dangerous drivers? Men or Women?



THE FACTS – MEN V WOMEN

Many more men than women are killed on UK roads and more men than women are convicted of killing other road users.

- More than three times as many men are killed on roads as women: in 2004, 2,539 men were killed, and 829 women.
- Nearly 45,000 more men than women are seriously or slightly injured in crashes – 165,914 compared to 120,971 in 2004. That is 123 more serious and slight injuries among male road users every day than among female road users.
- Twice as many men than women are killed or seriously injured while walking or cycling. In 2004, 575 men were killed and 6,146 seriously injured on foot or bicycle, compared with 255 women killed and 2,962 seriously injured. ²⁵
- Men are also more likely to be convicted for killing someone else in a crash. In 2003, nearly all drivers (94%) convicted of causing death or bodily harm by dangerous driving in England and Wales were men. Home Office figures also show 96% of drivers convicted of dangerous driving were men. ²⁶

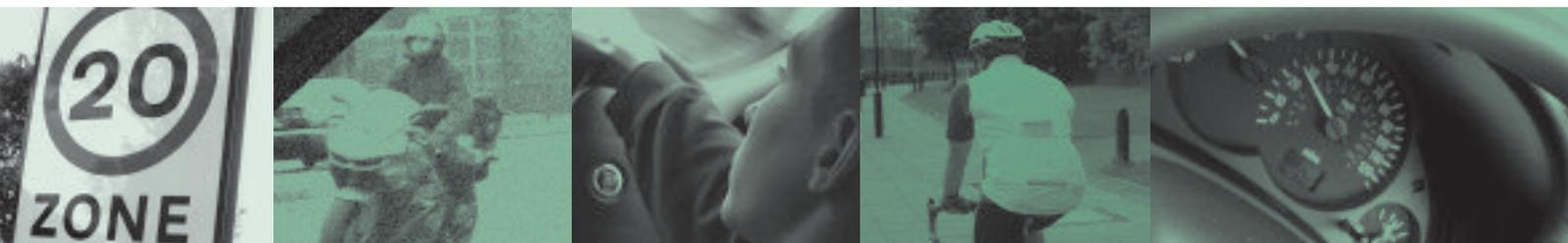
GOVERNMENT

Brake's Recommendations for Government Action

1. The National Cycle Network should include more off-road cycle paths between homes and amenities. Many drivers understand how risky roads are for cyclists, and will only get out their cars and cycle if they can do so 'off road'.
2. The Government should run year-round TV advertising campaigns explaining risks on roads. There is widespread confusion among drivers about how risky roads really are, and this may contribute to decisions to take risks when driving.
3. The Government should get serious about its campaign to persuade people to use their cars less, and use both environmental and safety reasons to persuade people to make other choices when they can. This should include TV advertising campaigns.
4. The Government should use mediums such as tax discs, driving licences, and vehicle registration reminders to tell people about the risks on roads and the importance of being safe. We need to be constantly reminded that every time we drive, we need to be as safe as possible.
5. The Government should invest much more in road safety, in light of the 9 people killed and 90 seriously injured on roads every day and the enormous cost that brings to bear on our economy and society. In particular, there should be investment in road engineering measures such as school safety zones, more enforcement to allow 24-hour traffic policing, and year-round education campaigns.

End Notes

- ¹ Department for Transport (DfT), *The Highway Code*, 2004
- ² DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ³ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004 and Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), *Collision Statistics Annual Report: 2004*
- ⁴ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ⁵ Office of National Statistics, *Deaths by Age, Sex and Underlying Cause*, 2004
- ⁶ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004 and PSNI, *Collision Statistics Annual Report: 2004*
- ⁷ Office of National Statistics, *Deaths by Age, Sex and Underlying Cause*, 2004
- ⁸ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ⁹ Department for Transport (DfT), *The Highway Code*, 2004
- ¹⁰ Ashton and Mackay, *Some Characteristics of the population who suffer trauma as pedestrians when hit by cars and some resulting implications*, 1979 and Gothenburg, Taylor, Lynam and Baruya, *The effects of drivers' speed on the frequency of road accidents (TRL report 421)*, 1999
- ¹¹ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ¹² DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ¹³ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ¹⁴ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ¹⁵ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004 and PSNI, *Collision Statistics Annual Report: 2004*
- ¹⁶ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ¹⁷ DfT, *Transport Trends: Current Edition*, Section 7, *Safety*
- ¹⁸ DfT, *The Government's Motorcycling Strategy*, 2005
- ¹⁹ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ²⁰ Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), *Collision Statistics Annual Report: 2004*
- ²¹ DfT, *National Travel Survey*, 2004
- ²² DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004
- ²³ PSNI, *Collision Statistics Annual Report: 2004*
- ²⁴ Home Office, *Motoring Offences and Breath Test Statistics (England and Wales 2003)*, 2005
- ²⁵ DfT, *Road Casualties in Great Britain: Annual Report*, 2004 and PSNI, *Collision Statistics Annual Report: 2004*
- ²⁶ Home Office, *Motoring Offences and Breath Test Statistics (England and Wales 2003)*, 2005



For more advice on safe driving, visit Green Flag's website, www.greenflag.com

For advice on safe driving, general information on road safety and details of road safety campaigns and events, including Road Safety Week, call Brake on 01484 559909, e-mail brake@brake.org.uk, or visit www.brake.org.uk or www.roadsafetyweek.org.uk.

For more information on Government campaigns on safe driving, visit the Department for Transport's *Think!* website, www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk



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