

The Road Victims' Charter

Essential action for all road victims

R e s p e c t . S u p p o r t . J u s t i c e .

This Road Victims' Charter demands essential action to ensure all those affected by a road crash receive the respect, support and justice they deserve. This Charter applies to everyone impacted by road death and serious injury in the UK, as well as UK citizens impacted by road crashes abroad.

Recognition of the trauma of sudden road death and injury

- **National standards for post-crash response:** Establish and promote national standards for post-crash response through consultation and collaboration with industry experts, appropriate specialists and individuals with lived experience. This collaboration should be led jointly by the Department for Transport, the Ministry of Justice, and the Department of Health and Social Care, to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach that addresses the full spectrum of needs arising from road crashes.
- **Commitment to best practice:** Set out a clear commitment for implementing best practice in post-crash response in a new Road Safety Strategy, in line with the post-crash response component of the Safe System.

Parity with other victim groups

- **Equal rights for all road victims:** Extend the rights set out in the Victims' Code to cover anyone impacted by road harm, regardless of location within the UK or whether a crime has occurred. Extend those rights to include additional support for road victims through the coronial process.

Support provision

- **Central government funding for support services:** A commitment to national, multi-year funding, in line with funding of support for other victim groups, for the provision of best practice support to the road victim community.
- **Accessible, trauma-informed support:** Ensure all families and individuals affected by road death or serious life-changing injury – including children and young people, and witnesses of road crashes – have access to professional, trauma-informed, face-to-face support and care within their local area.
- **Person-centred support:** Provide support that is tailored to the individual, ensuring people's preferences, needs and values are taken into consideration and guide decisions about their support.
- **Guidance for employers, educators and emergency responders:** Establish national guidance so that employers, education providers and emergency responders can adhere to best practice when supporting road victims. Guidance should also cover best practice for organisational response to road death and injury.

Robust and consistent justice

- **Sentencing to fit the crime:** Those who break traffic laws and cause harm should face fair, just, and robust penalties to deter dangerous driving and deliver justice for victims.
- **Stricter bail conditions for serious offences:** Anyone charged with causing death or serious injury while driving should not be allowed to drive as a condition of bail.
- **Strengthened driving bans:** Strengthen driving bans to include lifetime disqualification for those found guilty of causing death by dangerous driving. Close the 'exceptional hardship' loophole so that all drivers who accumulate 12 points over a three-year period receive a 6-month driving ban regardless of their circumstances.

Lessons learned to prevent future death and injury

- **Road Safety Investigation Branch:** Establish an independent Road Safety Investigation Branch, dedicated to investigating road crashes, analysing systemic issues, and making safety recommendations to prevent future death and injury.

- **Mandate and enhance use of data and reporting to understand crash causation and prevent future incidents.** All road crashes that cause death and serious injury, and all road crashes involving work vehicles, should undergo thorough investigation and detailed reporting. A Prevention of Future Death report should be issued following every fatal road crash.
- **Dedicated funding to enable multi-disciplinary research.** Establish secure funding to support enhanced road crash data collection, long-term outcome studies and economic impact analysis.

Appropriate language when reporting road death and injury

- **Put people first:** The language used when reporting road death and injury should recognise that road crashes are traumatic events that cause great distress to everyone involved. It is more acceptable to talk about 'road death' than 'fatalities'. 'Casualties' is an acceptable term when talking about deaths and serious injuries.
- **Crash not accident:** Road crashes are not accidents, they are serious, preventable events.

This Charter has been written by Brake, the road safety charity, in collaboration with representatives from the road victim community, support services, NHS, police and representatives from across the criminal justice sector.

#ActionForRoadVictims

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crash** 
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