

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 16th November 2022

REPORTING OFFICER: Operational Director – Policy, Planning and
Transportation

PORTFOLIO: Environment and Urban Renewal

SUBJECT: Annual Road Traffic Collision & Casualty Report

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on the latest road safety statistics released by the Department for Transport through the publication of the 2021 Comprehensive Annual Report.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

1) the overall progress made on casualty reduction in Halton over the past decade be noted; and

2) the 2023/24 Programme of road safety schemes, and road safety education, training, and publicity be endorsed.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The latest figures (2021) for Halton show a further decline in casualty numbers following last year's decrease. This contrasts very favourably with the national picture, where there have been significant increases in casualties of all severities (although still below pre-pandemic levels). A summary of the data is as follows:

- Halton achieved its performance targets, as set by the Department for Transport. (A KSI reduction of 40% by 2020 (based on a 2005-09 base average) was the target outcome).
- Halton is one of the few Local Authorities to report a fall in both collisions and casualties, against a nationally picture where road casualties (all categories) increased by 11% in 2021.
- There were 148 road traffic collisions involving personal injury within Halton, 1 fewer than the year before and a continuation of the long term downward trend. These incidents resulted in 176 casualties, a 3% decrease on the 2019 figures;
- A total of 18 KSI (killed or seriously injured) is lower than the figures for 2019 (22) and continues the long-term downward trend.
- 16 of the casualties were classed as serious, and regrettably 2 people lost their lives on Halton's roads (an increase of 1 compared to 2020).

- A total of 2 children seriously injured (CKSI) represents a decrease of 50% as compared to 4 in 2020 (as the numbers are small, percentage term comparisons can be misleading)
- There was a decrease in the number of people of all ages being slightly injured (SLI), with casualty numbers down to 158 (a decrease from 159 in 2020).
- Casualty numbers for vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists) continue to fall.
- A total of 11 collisions occurred on Mersey Gateway controlled roads, resulting in 14 casualties, a small increase on 2020's figures, but still significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels (23 collisions, 28 casualties in 2019).

3.2 Appendix A sets out the numbers of traffic collisions and casualties in 2021, together with comparisons of figures for previous years. Halton's performance in relation to neighbouring Local Authorities is also presented.

3.3 Of those killed or seriously injured, both the numbers of adult and child casualties decreased by two (total decrease of four). However due to the low numbers recorded annually in Halton, this number does fluctuate from year to year. A 5-year rolling average for casualty numbers is a more effective way to judge relative performance, and encouragingly both Adult and Child KSIs continued their downward trends.

3.4 In 2021 the country emerged from a succession of Covid pandemic lockdowns, unsurprisingly the rise in road casualty numbers almost exactly mirrored the rise in traffic levels. However, Halton is one of the few Local Authorities to report a fall in both collisions and casualties, and locally, only Knowsley MBC has come close to matching Halton's performance. Indeed, every other neighbouring Authority (both Liverpool City Region and Cheshire) has seen a rise in casualty numbers.

3.5 **National Position**

Nationally, road casualties (all categories) increased by 11% in 2021, as set out in the Department for Transport 2021 Comprehensive Annual Report on Road Casualties available via:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2021/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2021>

3.6 The Department for Transport (DfT) advises that comparisons with the previous years' figures should be interpreted carefully and advise that the 2020 sharp decline in casualty numbers, whilst very welcome, corresponded with a 21% decrease in road traffic due to the Covid pandemic. Although this year's figures show an increase in casualty numbers compared to 2020, they are still below the pre-pandemic levels.

3.7 The Government's 'Strategic Framework for Road Safety' (May 2011) formed part of an EU-wide outcomes framework for measuring progress on road casualty reductions. The framework sought to deliver reductions through encouraging best practice amongst local authorities, comparing local progress with national trends. Overall, a central KSI reduction forecast of 40% by 2020 (based on a 2005-09 base average) was identified as an outcome. Halton achieved this reduction with ease and whilst the remaining EU States have signed up for a 50% reduction in KSI numbers by 2030, as

yet no explicit casualty target numbers have been set by the U.K. Government. However, Halton remains focused on making our roads as safe as possible for all road users.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The work on casualty reductions is consistent with the policies and approaches incorporated in the Liverpool City Region's Transport Plan for Growth and Halton's Local Transport Plan 3 (2011 – 2025). Halton continues to participate in the Merseyside and Cheshire Road Safety Partnerships to share best practice and collaborate beyond administrative boundaries.

4.2 The completion of the Runcorn delinking works and Widnes Loops, together with the Silver Jubilee Bridge re-opening have reconfigured traffic flows around the Borough, plus the Covid pandemic impact on traffic levels (a fall in 2020 and bounce back in 2021), has made comparative analysis difficult in terms of where best to target the casualty reduction works. However, there has been a noticeable modal shift towards walking and cycling and special attention has been given to small scale schemes that improve our road safety infrastructure, as well as new active travel routes linking employment areas. Collaborative working with external agencies continues to offer an effective use of resources, and the ongoing decline in casualty numbers, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, is testament to this.

4.3 **Halton 2022/23 Programme Update**

This programme covers road traffic collision reduction schemes, road safety education, training, and publicity, as well as engaging with Cheshire Police to target effective enforcement action. Halton's Road Safety Team comprises four members of staff operating at 3.2 FTE (full time equivalent) and who also manage the School Crossing Patrol Service.

4.4 **Community Speed Watch**, a collaborative initiative with Cheshire Police, remains very popular and we now have volunteers at 25 sites across the Borough and there is a least one group in every Ward. Work continues to increase the number of volunteers.

4.5 **"Smiley" SiDs** (speed indicative device / sign) remain ever-popular with Halton residents. In addition to encouraging lower speeds they also record the approach speeds of every vehicle. This information is shared with Cheshire Police when a particular speed problem is identified. The Team currently manages almost twenty of these devices around the Borough, many of them purchased by Area Forums and Parish Councils. We also operate a number of digital signs that flash either speed limit roundel or road safety messages, should an approaching vehicle be travelling at excessive speed.

4.6 **Speed Camera A562** (Speke Road). This year the fixed speed camera on the westbound carriageway of A562 Speke Road was recommissioned after a period of non-operation. It was important to re-establish some kind of speed management at this site that had seen a fatal collision in recent years.

4.7 **Gyratory Red Light Camera**. In conjunction with the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, work is ongoing to install a red light / speed on green camera at A557

Watkinson Way, a site with the highest density of collisions in the Borough. In addition to enhancing road safety it is anticipated that this device will improve traffic congestion during peak hours, raising the capacity of this strategic junction.

- 4.8 **Mobile Speed Camera Sites.** Working closely with the Cheshire Road Safety Group the Team has sought to improve existing mobile speed camera sites and add existing locations for speed enforcement. Wilmere Lane (Widnes) has seen the 'Smiley SiD' signs recording very high speeds and therefore has had an area of hard-standing constructed for the CRSG mobile camera van. Effective enforcement action will encourage safer driver behaviour.
- 4.9 **Collision Sites.** Using collision data supplied by Cheshire Police the Team has identified junctions where accident causation factors have included 'failure to Give Way' or 'failure to look properly'. Small scale schemes that make improvements (for example: cutting back vegetation; moving Give Way lines forward of parked cars; new signage; road markings etc.) have been undertaken at almost a dozen collision sites.
- 4.10 **Safer Active Travel.** In support of various policy objectives (tackling climate change, improving health and wellbeing; improving air quality; options to lower the cost of living) Halton has been undertaking a number of large-scale cycling / walking initiatives to link residential areas with employment areas. These schemes have been funded via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. A number of improvement works that complement the Active Travel Strategy have included new pedestrian crossings, refuge islands, new lengths of high-friction anti-skid surfacing at controlled crossing points, and ensured uncontrolled crossings remain free from parked vehicles using physical features, including bollards, and lengths of pedestrian guard railing. Speed limits have been reduced at several sites where new cycleways are being introduced. The Team continues to undertake road safety audits (RSAs) on all the Borough's major schemes, to ensure that the safety of all road users is a priority.
- 4.11 **Education.** The Team has engaged with children and adults of all ages to deliver training and education:
- The 'Show You Care, Park Elsewhere' scheme to reduce congestion and promote road safety outside schools was delivered at reported hotspots
 - Over 1600 school children in Halton have had some form of cycle training in the previous academic year.
 - 'Stepping Out' pedestrian crossing training for Year 3 pupils has been provided at almost every school
 - The Team has undertaken drink / drug driving campaigns with you adults in local colleges.
 - In-car safety training for the very young and their parents and carers has been undertaken at numerous pre-schools and nurseries
 - Community family fun days at community and children centres have proved massively popular, with additional dates being added due to demand
 - Road safety training has been provided to refugees and asylum seekers in the Borough
- 4.12 **Halton 2023/24 Programme**
- It is proposed to concentrate on interventions that enhance the safety of pedestrians and pedal cyclists (who still account for almost half of all KSIs). This

activity also supports a number of policy objectives, including encouraging modal shift.

- Collision analysis will be undertaken at sites with higher than expected collision histories. Work is then carried out at locations where improvements can be made, for example, the installation of refuge islands, improved cycleway signage and installed physical features to clear obstructive parking from pedestrian crossing points.
- Examining wet weather skidding sites. The pedestrian crossing on Cronton Lane has had anti-skid treatment applied. There are a number of other sites identified for further consideration. This work is expensive as anti-skid is costly to install, so only limited.
- Extending mobile safety camera sites with Cheshire Police. Data from Smiley SiDs provides an indication of priority roads. A new mobile camera van lay-by is being installed on Derby Road as part of the Highway's cycle improvement scheme. It is expected that several more mobile sites could be added in Halton.
- Community Speed Watch will continue to be supported through new signage and site assessments etc.
- Education. The education programme will continue as highlighted under the current programme set out above.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implication resulting from the publication of these latest figures.

5.2 Funding for road safety initiatives is now derived from a number of sources. Since 2011 'ring-fenced' grants for road safety have been removed. Consequentially this means that the road safety programme must be strictly prioritised.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

By helping to create a safer environment, road safety casualty reduction work assists in the safeguarding of children and young people and in the achievement of accessible services.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Improving road safety can encourage people to access opportunities for work, especially via sustainable / active travel means.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Any reduction in road casualties releases health resources to be focused on other areas of health care.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Road safety casualty reduction work of all types supports this priority through the introduction of initiatives and interventions designed to deliver a safer environment.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are benefits to the environment through encouraging active travel choices.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The 2021 DfT statistics indicate that Halton is performing well in term of road safety and collision reduction. However, a reduction in dedicated road safety resources can impact negatively on road safety and associated road collision statistics.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 There are no direct equality and diversity issues associated with this report.

9.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

9.1 Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 16 February 2022.

Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 18 November 2020.

Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 13 November 2019

Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 27 February 2019;

Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 15 November 2017.

Halton 2021 Traffic Collisions Review

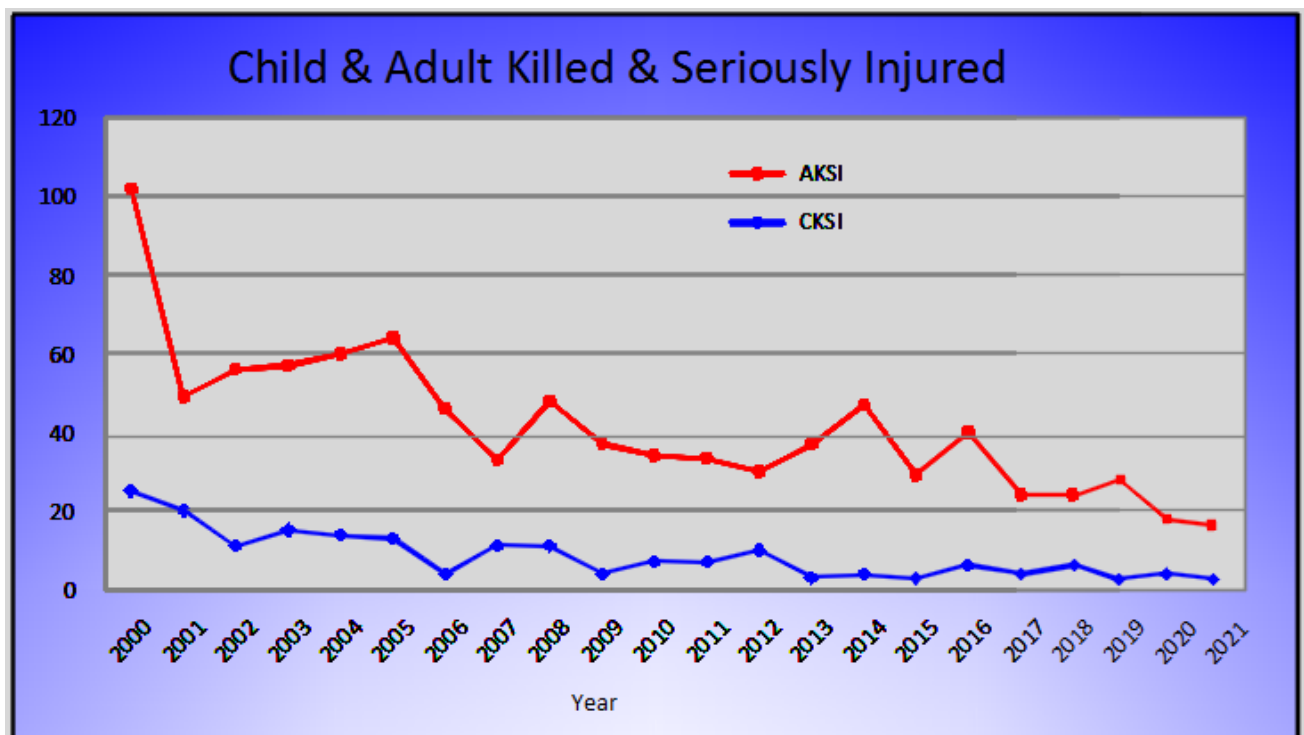
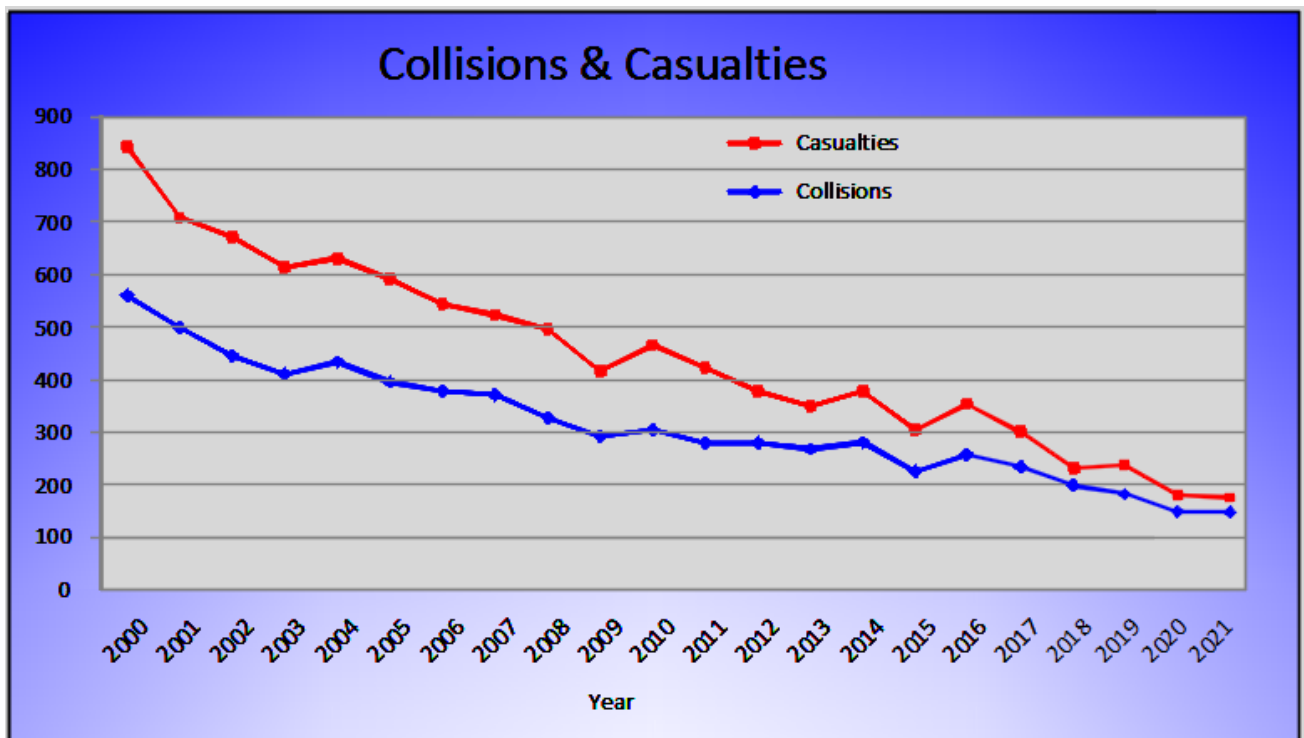
2020 saw a fall in the number of road traffic casualties in Halton, and positively that decline in casualty numbers has continued into 2021. The number of collisions fell to a record low of 158, despite traffic levels increasing, as the country emerged from lockdowns. The number of KSIs (both for adults and children) also fell to record lows, bucking the national trend.

All accidents that were reported to Cheshire Police and which occurred within the adopted highway in Halton involving at least one motor vehicle, horse rider or cyclist, and where at least one person was injured, are included in this Review. Collisions that occur on private land (or driveways) and car parks are not included in the statistics. Likewise, accidents that do not result in personal injuries are also excluded.

The decrease in casualty numbers in Halton were in both the slight injury category (SLI) and the killed or seriously injured (KSI) categories. Most of the country has seen an upturn in collisions and casualty numbers, much of this attributed to a post-lockdown rise in traffic flows, making Halton's performance even more impressive.

Year	Collisions	All casualties	Adult Deaths / Serious Injuries (AKSIs)	Child Deaths / Serious Injuries (CKSIs)	Slight Injuries All Ages (SLI)
2000	558	842	105	25	712
2001	497	706	49	20	637
2002	444	670	56	11	603
2003	409	612	57	17	538
2004	432	629	60	14	555
2005	394	590	64	13	513
2006	377	543	46	4	493
2007	370	521	33	11	477
2008	326	494	48	11	435
2009	291	415	37	4	374
2010	303	464	34	7	423
2011	278	422	33	7	382
2012	278	377	30	10	337
2013	267	347	37	3	307
2014	279	376	47	4	325
2015	224	304	30	2	272
2016	258	354	40	6	308
2017	243	303	24	4	275
2018	197	232	24	6	202
2019	183	239	29	2	208
2020	149	181	18	4	159
2021	148	176	16	2	158

Killed and Seriously Injured, All Ages (KSI) (Local Indicator PPTLI 6)



2021 saw another decrease in the number of all-age casualties killed or seriously injured (KSI) in Halton, to a record low of 18. Sadly, two people lost their lives on Halton's roads in 2021, a rise from one the year previously.

The DfT once again advises that comparisons with previous years' figures should be interpreted with caution, given that there have been changes in the systems used for severity reporting by police forces and the dramatic changes in traffic levels associated with Covid lockdowns. Encouragingly, Halton, in comparison with other Authorities within the Cheshire Constabulary area was the best performing Local Authority.

Given the small numbers involved and their inherent volatility, it is more advantageous to use a rolling average, taken over a number of years. The five year rolling average (PPTLI 6) actually dropped from 31.4 to 25.8, a substantial decline. KSI totals have plateaued in recent years and influencing factors such as the new Mersey Gateway Bridge and associated road system being outside Council control; reductions in budgets and the focus on small scale marginal gains; and changes to the Police serious injury reporting system have meant that opportunities to drive significant improvements are increasingly limited. It remains to be seen if 2021's figures can be improved upon, given how low they are historically.

Children (u16s) Killed and Seriously Injured (CKSI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 7*)

In 2021, 2 children were KSI (killed or seriously injured) in Halton, a decrease of 2 in comparison with 2020. Due to the numbers being so low, this annual total is traditionally very prone to variations, year on year. The five year rolling CSKI average (PPLTI 7) has also decreased and is now 3.6, compared with 4.4 last year. Decreases in child casualty numbers are always welcome and the focus on schools for road safety engineering and education will be maintained. On another positive note, there was a 60% reduction in children slightly injured in Halton.

Slight, All-Age Casualties (SLI) (*Local Indicator PPTLI 8*)

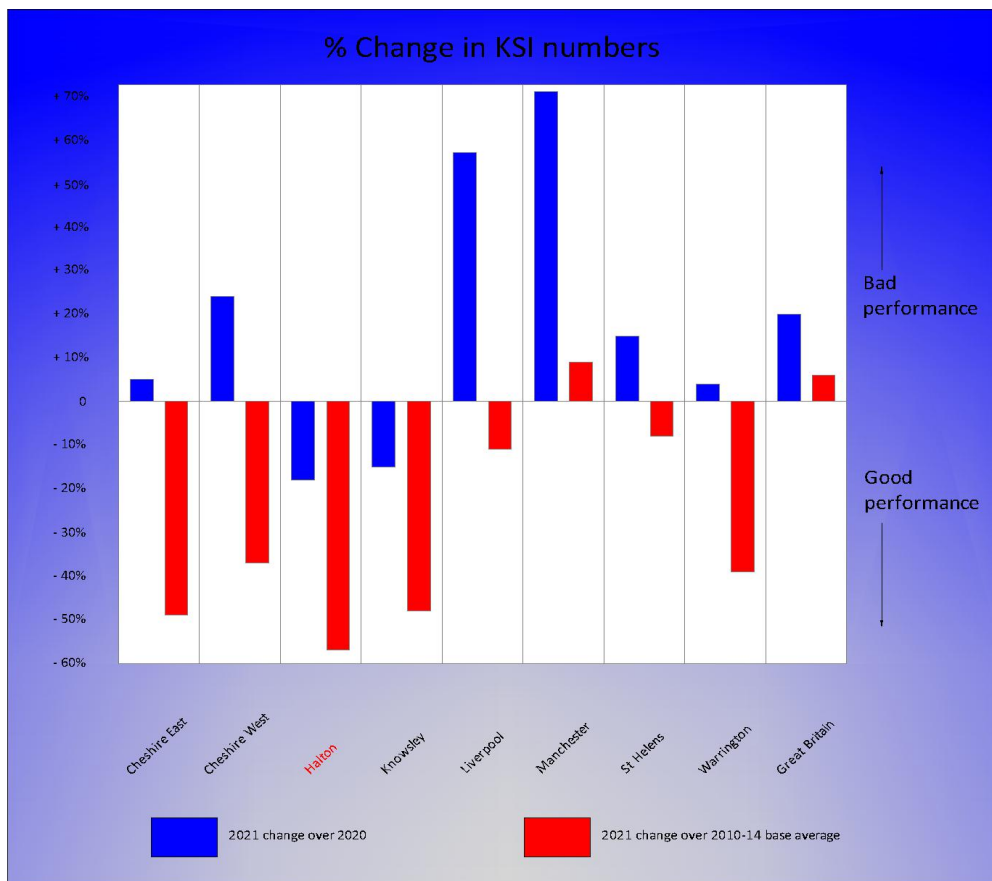
In 2020 there was a slight decrease in people of all ages slightly injured in Halton, down to 158 from 159, another record low.

Halton appears to have performed better than most Local Authorities who have mostly seen increased numbers in this category of casualty.

In 2011 the Government set out a strategy for Road Safety that set out an outcomes framework designed to help Local Government, local organisations and citizens to monitor progress towards improving road safety and decreasing the number of fatalities and seriously injured casualties.

The framework included six key indicators relating to road deaths. These were intended to measure the key outcomes of the strategy, but in Halton, given the low number of fatalities, and the consequent fluctuations, it was proposed to use KSI rates instead. Halton met its casualty reduction targets with ease but as yet, the Government is still to announce any fresh initiatives.

KSI	2010-2014 average	2020	2021	2021 change over 2020	2021 change over 2010-14 average
Cheshire East	232	112	118	+5%	-49%
Cheshire West & Chester	191	97	121	+24%	-37%
Halton	42	22	18	-18%	-57%
Knowsley	56	34	29	-15%	-48%
Liverpool	225	127	200	+57%	-11%
Manchester	172	110	188	+71%	+9%
St Helens	66	53	61	+15%	-8%
Warrington	96	57	59	+4%	-39%
GB	24,456	21,562	25,892	+20%	+6%



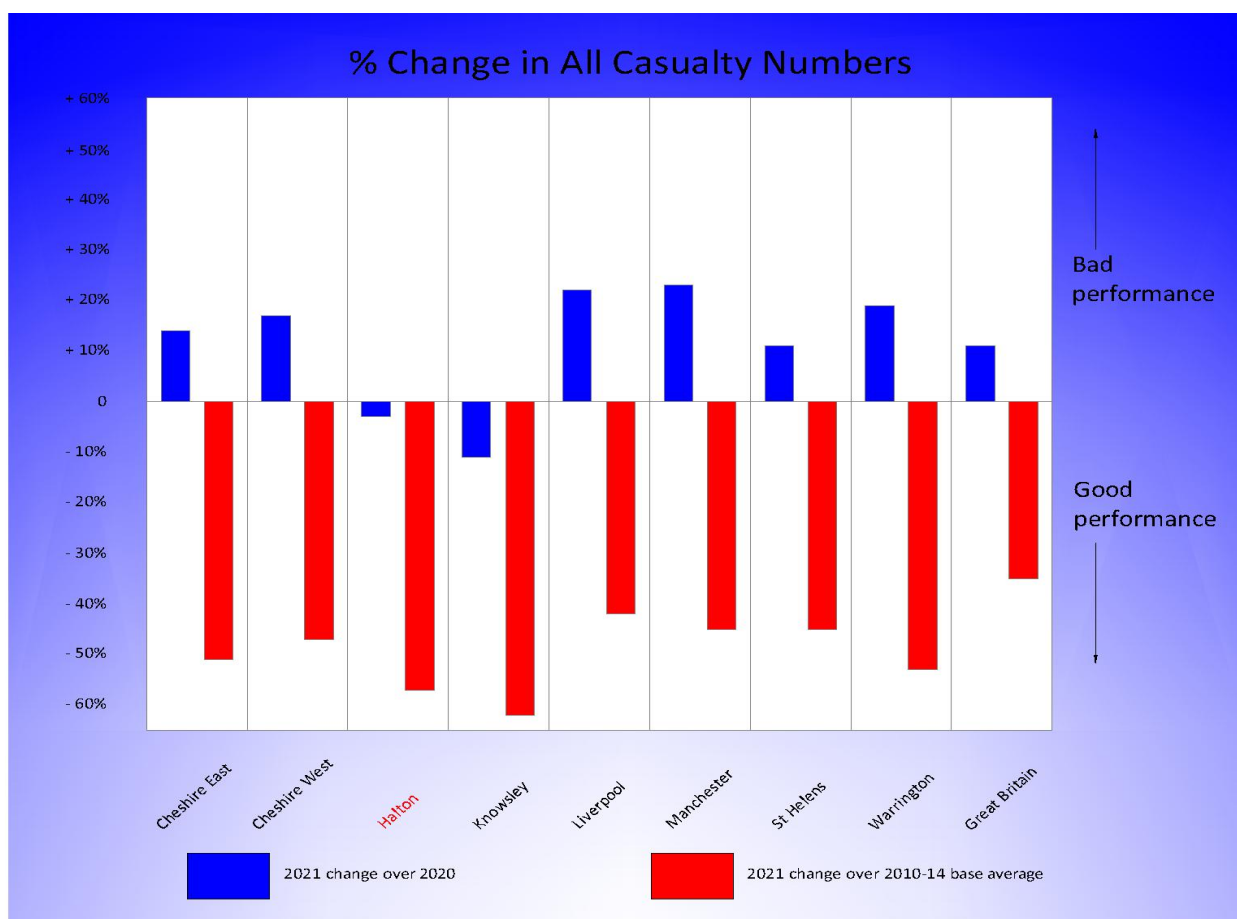
Looking at neighbouring Local Authorities, it is clear that with regards to KSI casualties, Halton is one of the most effective areas in the region in 2021. Longer-term trends paint a similar picture, and both regionally and nationally, Halton is one of the better performing Local Authorities. However, it must be noted that the ongoing changes to the reporting systems used by Police Forces since 2016 have stalled somewhat during the pandemic, making it easier to gauge the success of casualty reduction strategies of Local Authorities from different Police Constabulary areas in the past 12 months. As such, with no changes to collision reporting in any Police Constabularies last year, the collision data for 2021 is directly comparable with that of the previous year.

Looking at the table below it is apparent that Halton's performance in reducing road traffic casualty numbers is better than most of our neighbouring Local Authorities in the previous 12 months. Also, relative to the 2010-2014 base average, Halton is well above average, with only Knowsley MBC outperforming Halton.

Given the very small numbers involved, Halton's KSI casualty figures can be prone to wide percentage variations, year on year. 2017 saw a dramatic decrease in numbers that, at the time, was difficult to explain. Conversely, whilst both 2019 and 2018 saw our figures rise slightly and 2020 saw a 29% reduction in KSIs of all ages, the 18% drop in KSIs in 2021 is slightly unexpected, but nevertheless very welcome. Halton's 5-year rolling average continues its steady decline.

Looking to the future it is difficult to imagine casualty numbers, particularly KSIs, falling much further, especially as we've seen an 86% fall in KSI casualties in the past 21 years. It might be that maintaining casualty numbers at this level will be judged a success.

All casualties	2010-2014 average	2020	2021	2021 change over 2020	2021 change over 2010-14 average
Cheshire East	1495	645	738	+14%	-51%
Cheshire West & Chester	1222	550	646	+17%	-47%
Halton	397	181	176	-3%	-57%
Knowsley	450	194	172	-11%	-62%
Liverpool	1849	876	1071	+22%	-42%
Manchester	1645	735	902	+23%	-45%
St Helens	480	235	262	+11%	-45%
Warrington	821	323	385	+19%	-53%
GB	196,133	115,584	128,209	+11%	-35%



The reasons behind the continued fall in casualty numbers, in contrast to other Local Authorities, are not easy to determine. Traffic levels have risen as the country emerged from a succession of lockdowns and nationally the upturn in casualty numbers has mirrored this rise.

The changes to the strategic highway network within Halton were complete in 2020, but the fall in traffic levels on these roads has continued to make it difficult to know where best to target resources as part of a casualty reduction strategy. As a consequence of this, and with ongoing budgetary constraints, focus has moved to multiple small scale initiatives that develop pedestrian and cycle infrastructure; improve junction layouts and visibility; target speed enforcement action by Cheshire Police and generally improve signage and road marking layouts at collision hotspots.

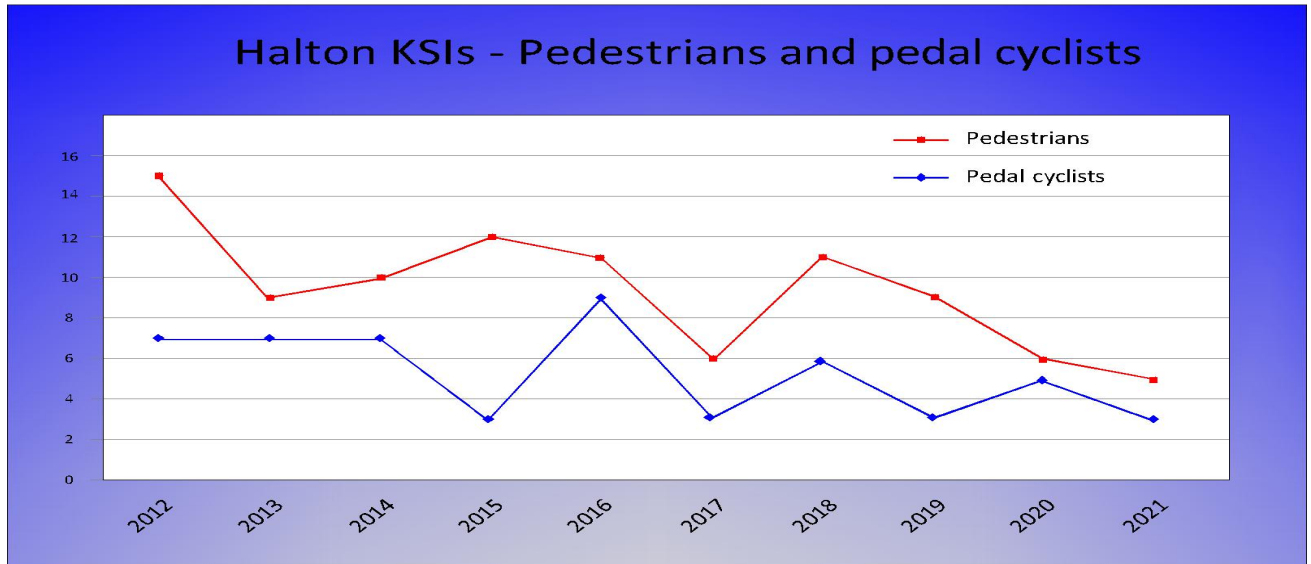
Whilst traffic flows increased in 2021, they still remain below pre-pandemic levels and this continues to make the identification of appropriate sites for road safety engineering works difficult, especially on traditionally busy commuter routes. However there are still identifiable locations where significant improvements can be achieved, but these are reducing in number and budgetary constraints mean a scaling back of engineering interventions. In addition to larger scale works, a greater number of small-scale engineering schemes have been devised to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users.

Given that the shift towards more sustainable transport / active travel has been given greater priority in recent years, it is vital that safe road space is given to these groups. Halton continues to work closely with Cheshire Police and Cheshire Road Safety Group to promote Community Speed Watch as well as the maintenance and upgrading of fixed and mobile speed camera sites. This year the fixed speed camera on A562 Speke Road (westbound) has been recommissioned and new mobile camera sites have been identified and associated engineering works undertaken. Work is ongoing with Cheshire Police and CRSG to install a red light / speed on green camera at A557 Watkinson Way.

The Road Safety team continues to engage with a number of different road users through an extensive programme of education, training and publicity. As well as running the Junior Safety Officer scheme in almost every school in the Borough, they also deliver cycle training and the 'Stepping Out' pedestrian safety scheme for primary school children. A total of 1623 children in the Borough received cycle training in the academic year up to July 2022; either through Bikeability or via one to one training with the Road Safety team. The 'Show you care, park elsewhere' scheme to reduce congestion and promote road safety outside schools was delivered at a number of different hotspots, and drink / drug driving campaigns were undertaken at local colleges. This is in addition to managing the ever popular School Crossing Patrol service. The 'Summer Road Safety Activities' at local Community Centres continued into 2022 and were once again very popular. The Road Safety team also attended Children Centres' fun days to deliver road safety training and information on in-car safety and attended Crucial Crew, the two week child safety event attended by almost every Year 5 child in Halton.

Looking at casualty numbers for pedal cyclists and pedestrians over recent years it appears that this engineering and education strategy is paying dividends, as casualty numbers for both modes have fallen. In 2012, pedestrians and pedal cyclists accounted for 55% of all KSI casualties, by last year this had been reduced to 44%. It is hoped that with a number of new schemes nearing completion this should stand us in good stead, but focus should remain, especially as with such low numbers of casualties, they are prone to statistical fluctuations.

Halton KSIs – Pedestrians and pedal cyclists										
Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Pedestrians	15	9	10	12	11	6	11	9	6	5
Cyclists	7	7	7	3	9	3	6	3	5	3



From a road safety perspective it will be increasingly difficult to achieve a reduction in casualty numbers in future years whilst promoting a growth in use of cycling and walking, these are traditionally two of the most vulnerable road user groups with high casualty rates. Add to this the general move to these transport modes caused by economic necessity and there will be a tension between providing an efficient road network for motor vehicles and a safe environment for an increasingly high level of walking and cycle usage.

In 2011 the Government targeted a reduction of 40% in KSIs by 2020, relative to the baseline 2005-09 figures, something Halton achieved with ease. Indeed, Halton managed a 62% reduction during this period. Looking forward, there aren't any new road casualty reduction targets set by U.K. Government, although in 2020, the Government spoke at the World Health Organisation's Road Safety 2020 conference in Stockholm, supporting the global target of "50 by 30" in the UN road safety declaration (a 50% reduction in road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030). The 27 EU states have recently signed up to this programme but no announcement has been made by the U.K. Government regarding the adoption of these targets. Irrespective of this, Halton remains focused on delivering the safest road network possible.