

REPORT TO: Environment and Urban Renewal
Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 15th November 2023

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director, Environment and Regeneration

PORTFOLIO: Environment & 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 2022 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 2024/25 strategy of road safety schemes, road safety education, training, and publicity be endorsed.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The latest figures (2022) for Halton show a small rise in overall casualty numbers following last year's decrease. This is consistent with the national picture, where there have been increases in casualties of all severities over the previous 12 months (although still below pre-pandemic levels). A summary of the data is as follows:

- Halton easily 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). No new performance targets for English Local Authorities, outside London, have been set.
- There were 157 road traffic collisions involving personal injury within Halton, 9 more than the year before. These incidents resulted in 188 casualties, a 7% increase on the 2021 figures, but 24% below 2019 when traffic levels were comparable.
- For the first year the figures in this report are adjusted to take into account a historic under-reporting of road traffic collisions and casualties and are more representative of the true picture. They also allow a more uniform reporting of casualty numbers over time and between different Police Constabularies and Local Authorities.

- A total of 42 KSI (killed or seriously injured) represents a substantial increase on the previous year but are lower than the figures for 2019 (46) and continues the long-term downward trend.
- 40 of the casualties were classed as serious, and regrettably 2 people lost their lives on Halton's roads (the same number as 2021).
- A total of 3 children were seriously injured (CKSI) which represents an increase of 50% as compared to 2 in 2021 (as the numbers are small, percentage term comparisons can be misleading)
- There was a marginal decrease in the number of people of all ages being slightly injured (SLI), with casualty numbers down to 156 (a fall from 158 in 2021).
- Casualty numbers for vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists) have shown a slight rise but the 5 year rolling average shows a consistent decline.
- A total of 11 collisions occurred on Mersey Gateway controlled roads, resulting in 16 casualties, almost identical to 2021'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 2022, 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 increased. 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 2022 the country emerged from a succession of covid pandemic lockdowns, unsurprisingly the rise in road casualty numbers, in both Halton and nationally, almost exactly mirrored the rise in traffic levels.

3.5 **National Position**

Nationally, road casualties (all categories) increased by 6% in 2022, as set out in the Department for Transport 2022 Comprehensive Annual Report on Road Casualties available via:

[Reported road casualties Great Britain, annual report: 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2022)

3.6 The Department for Transport (DfT) advises that comparisons with the previous years' figures should be interpreted carefully and advise that focus should be made on this year's performance in comparison with 2019, before the lockdowns associated with the Covid19 pandemic. Using this metric to gauge the success of our road casualty reduction programme relative to others, Halton is one of the better performing Local Authorities.

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, small bounce back in 2021 and further increases in 2022), 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 (a 7% increase in pedestrian movements in 2022) 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 to further encourage walking and cycling. 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 **"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.
- 4.5 **Speed Camera A562** (Speke Road). This year the fixed speed camera on the westbound carriageway of A562 Speke Road was further improved with the introduction of a vandal-resistant 'smart pole' to house the digital camera. It was important to maintain some kind of speed management at a site that had seen a fatal collision in recent years.
- 4.6 **Gyratory Red Light Camera**. In conjunction with the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner, a red light / speed on green camera has recently been installed 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.

- 4.7 **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. A couple of possible locations have recently been identified and work is ongoing to determine their viability. Effective enforcement action will encourage safer driver behaviour.
- 4.8 **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. The speed limits on Northern Lane and Hough Green Road, Widnes have recently been reduced from 40mph to 30mph and improvements to pedestrian facilities here have been programmed.
- 4.9 **Safer Active Travel.** In support of various policy objectives (tackling climate change, improving health and well being; 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.
- 4.10 **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 1300 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
 - The School Crossing Patrol Service remains extremely popular with parents and children and every day out Patrols help over 3500 children cross the road
 - 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
- 4.11 **Halton 2023/24 Strategy**
- 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.
- Cheshire Police have recently indicated a greater willingness to share information and meet on site to discuss possible remedial measures for serious collisions.
- 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 programmed to be 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.
- Education, training and publicity. The ETP 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 2022 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 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no direct climate change implications associated with this report.

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

10.1 Report to Environment & Urban Renewal Policy & Performance Board on 16th November 2022

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;

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Halton 2022 Traffic Collisions Review

In 2022 Halton saw a slight rise in collisions and casualty numbers as the country emerged from a succession of lockdowns from March 2020 onwards, associated with the Covid19 pandemic. The previous 12 months saw a marginal increase in the number of collisions, a narrow decrease in those slightly injured and regrettably a substantial increase in those seriously injured.

Given the impacts lockdowns had on both traffic levels and human behaviour, the Department for Transport advises against comparisons to periods which included the restrictions. Instead, they recommend direct comparisons with 2019 casualty figures since traffic levels have now risen to almost pre-pandemic levels. Comparing this year's data with 2019, we can see that both casualty and collisions numbers are significantly lower now, despite broadly similar levels of traffic on our roads.

All accidents 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 or do not result in personal injuries also excluded.

For the first year, the figures in this report for injured casualties are based on adjusting figures reported by the Police to take account of a historic under-reporting of road traffic collisions. These adjusted figures can reliably be used to compare trends over time across the country.

The Department for Transport has engaged with all Police Constabularies to ensure a uniform approach to STATS19 information gathering and in addition, changes to injury severity assessments have been made. Collisions are now more readily classified as 'severe' under these new rules. Historical data has also been re-examined and now the DfT is able to provide 10 years' worth of directly comparable data for every Police Force and Local Authority.

Year	Collisions	All casualties	Adult Deaths / Serious Injuries (adjusted) (AKSIs)	Child Deaths / Serious Injuries (CKSIs)	Slight Injuries All Ages (SLI)
2013	267	347	57	3	307
2014	279	376	68	4	325
2015	224	304	47	2	272
2016	257	353	61	6	308
2017	241	303	43	4	275
2018	194	230	42	6	202
2019	190	249	46	2	208
2020	149	181	32	4	159
2021	148	176	28	2	158
2022	157	188	39	3	156

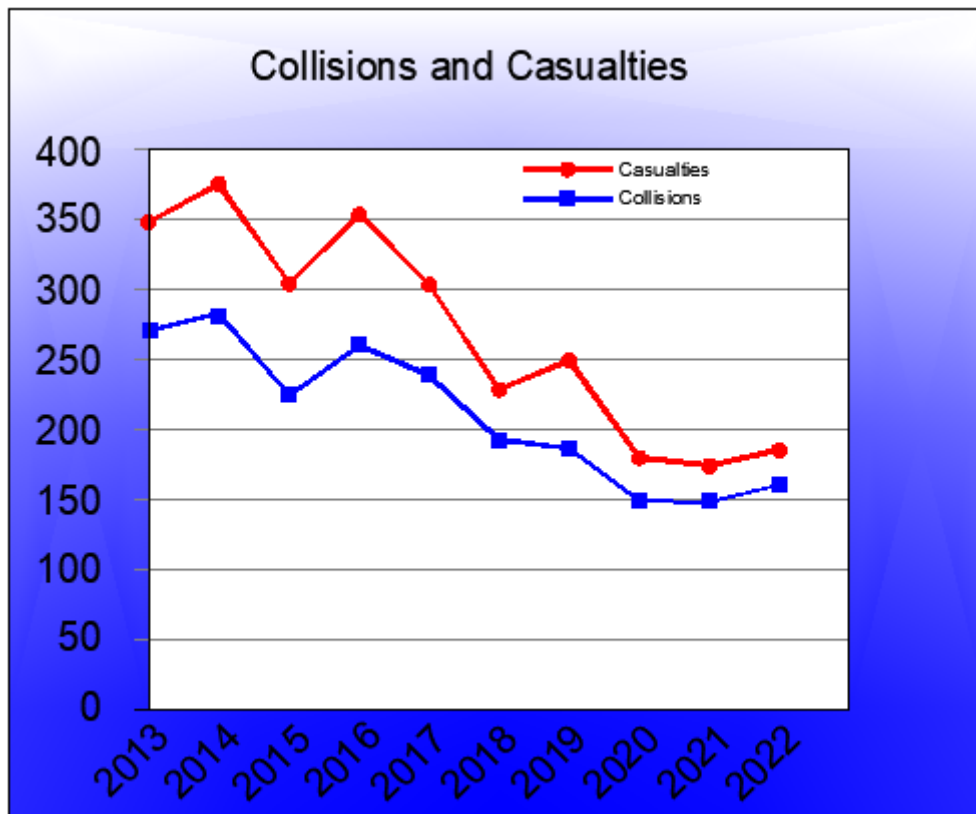


Figure 1 – Collisions and casualties (all categories) 2013 – 2022

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

2022 saw an increase in the number of all-age casualties killed or seriously injured (KSI) in Halton, from 30 in 2021 to 42 in 2022. Sadly, two people lost their lives on Halton’s roads in 2022, the same number as the year previously.

The DfT advises that comparisons with previous two years’ figures should be interpreted with caution, given the dramatic changes in traffic levels associated with Covid lockdowns. Disappointingly, Halton, in comparison with other Authorities within the Cheshire Constabulary area and Liverpool City Region was one of the worst performing Local Authorities when comparing figures with 2021. However, when following the DfT’s recommendations to only compare with 2019’s casualty numbers, Halton remains one of the top-performing Local Authorities.

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 38.2 to 37, a significant decline. KSI totals have plateaued somewhat 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.

This year’s rise in KSI numbers was not unexpected, given the rise in traffic levels, and it will be interesting to see if the historic downward shift in the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads can be maintained.

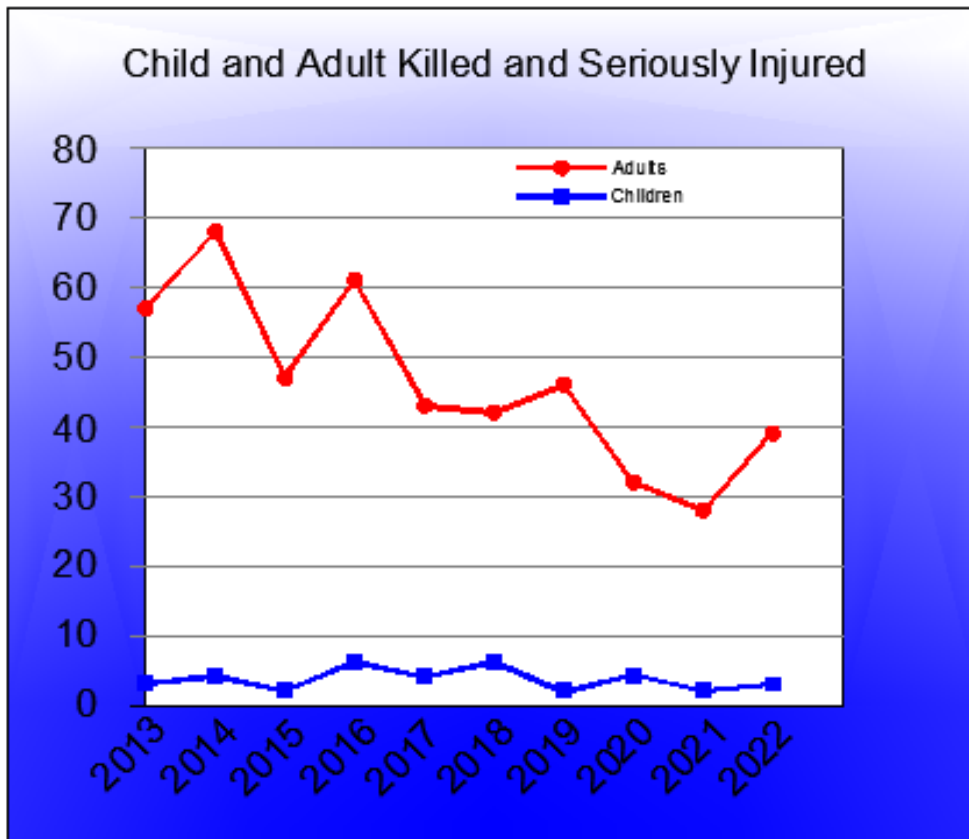


Figure 2 – Killed and Seriously Injured (Adults and Children) 2013 – 2022

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

In 2022, 3 children were KSI (killed or seriously injured) in Halton, an increase of 1 in comparison with 2021. 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 3.4, compared with 3.6 last year. Decreases in child casualty numbers are always welcome and the focus on schools for road safety engineering and education will be maintained.

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

In 2022 there was a slight decrease in people of all ages slightly injured in Halton, down to 156 from 158, another record low. Comparison with pre-pandemic levels makes even better reading, with Slight, All-Age Casualties showing a 25% reduction on the 2019 figures.

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

Then number of collisions on the Borough's roads increased slightly but are still significantly lower than pre-pandemic levels.

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 2020 casualty reduction targets with ease but three years on, the Government is still to announce any fresh initiatives.

In 2021 U.K. Government Ministers spoke at the World Health Organisation’s Road Safety conference in Stockholm, supporting the global target of ‘50 by 30’ in the U.N. road safety declaration (a 50% reduction in road traffic deaths and injuries by 2030).

However, at home the U.K. Government has only set casualty reduction targets for Highways England despite administrations in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and London adopting explicit targets for their areas. Notwithstanding the lack of tangible targets, it is important that progress towards achieving safer roads is monitored and our performance against neighbouring Local Authorities should be measured.

Looking at overall casualty numbers, despite a small uptick in 2022 compared to the year before, Halton is outperforming many neighbouring Authorities and the national picture. Although traffic levels have almost returned to pre-pandemic levels, casualty numbers in Halton have not, which is a source of encouragement. Locally, only Manchester City Council and Warrington Borough Council have out-performed Halton over the past three years.

All casualties	2013-2017 average	2019	2021	2022	2022 change over 2021	2022 change over 2019
Cheshire East	1179	751	738	821	+11%	-9%
Cheshire West & Chester	1038	743	646	707	+9%	-5%
Halton	337	249	176	188	+7%	-24%
Knowsley	376	259	172	295	+72%	+14%
Liverpool	1524	1143	1071	1193	+11%	+4%
Manchester	1216	1209	902	868	-4%	-28%
St Helens	415	285	262	290	+11%	+2%
Warrington	669	454	385	382	+0%	-42%
GB	169,341	151,514	128,209	135,280	+6%	-12%

With regards those killed or seriously injured, the situation is less positive, as there was a large increase in Adult KSIs for 2022, as compared with the year previously. However, following the DfT’s recommendations to only compare with 2019’s casualty numbers, Halton’s KSI look more than reasonable and compare favourably with Local Authorities in both the Liverpool City Region and Cheshire. Also, given that the numbers in Halton are so low, it is prone to wilder statistical

fluctuations than larger Local Authorities, underlining the importance of examining longer-term trends than year on year variations.

It will be interesting to see if the long-term downward trend can be maintained, or if the post-pandemic upturn in those killed or seriously injured on our roads is a new, worrying development. It goes without saying that in the current economic climate Local Authorities operate under severe financial constraints, lacking the resources to engage in new, large-scale casualty reduction strategies.

KSI (adjusted)	2013-2017 average	2019	2021	2022	2022 change over 2021	2022 change over 2019
Cheshire East	254	161	163	192	+18%	+19%
Cheshire West & Chester	200	132	157	142	-10%	+8%
Halton	55	46	30	42	+40%	-9%
Knowsley	75	47	39	71	+82%	+51%
Liverpool	304	257	268	267	+0%	+4%
Manchester	251	232	194	184	-5%	-21%
St Helens	84	83	76	63	-13%	-24%
Warrington	88	76	81	66	-22%	-13%
GB	31,119	30,364	24,497	29,742	+21%	-3%

When engaged in a casualty reduction programme it is vital to know who is involved and the causes behind these collisions. These, and long-term trends should also be examined to inform decisions and better enable us to target resources.

Casualty numbers (all severities) by road user type								
Year	Pedestrian	Pedal Cyclist	Motorcyclist	Car Occupant	Bus Occupant	Van Occupant	HGV Occupant	Other Veh Occupant
2013	43	26	31	235	3	7	0	2
2014	34	51	41	229	4	14	3	0
2015	45	24	29	185	3	8	7	3
2016	43	39	36	181	36	14	1	3
2017	41	37	28	175	14	7	1	0
2018	32	37	20	126	3	9	3	0
2019	36	21	25	155	3	4	4	1
2020	26	35	21	91	1	5	2	0
2021	17	26	19	102	1	5	4	2
2022	22	29	24	101	0	8	0	4

Most road user types show a decline in casualty numbers over the previous 12 months, except for cyclists, motorcyclists and van occupants, which although fluctuating, remain broadly constant over

the previous 10 years. However, it is worth noting that the 5 year rolling average for every category except van and other vehicle occupants is in decline.

In recent years Local Authorities have been actively encouraged to increase the number of people walking and cycling, through the construction of new pedestrian and cycle-only routes, re-allocation of road space and other initiatives to boost 'active travel'.

Walking is currently the only mode of transport where average trips per person are above 2019 levels and it is very satisfying to see a significant reduction in pedestrian casualties, both medium and long-term. Indeed KSI figures for pedestrians are currently half the number they were in 2019 and is testament to the number of pedestrian-focused engineering measures and road safety initiatives Halton Borough Council has engaged with, in recent years. Indeed, last year our Road Safety team delivered 'Stepping Out' pedestrian training to 892 primary school children across the Borough.

The casualty rates for cycling remain stubbornly constant, but with the construction of new, strategic traffic-free cycle routes in the Borough these numbers may begin to subside. Halton Borough Council delivered Bikeability training to 1339 children in Halton and cycle safety talks and independent travel training was provided to Years 5 & 6 children.

Of the 24 motorcyclists injured in Halton in 2022, 13 were categorised as serious, with one fatality. Of these 14 KSIs, almost half were aged under 30, with one being a child. Some of these casualties were riding illegally and were also engaged in other criminal activities. As such these people are extremely difficult to engage with from an education, training and publicity perspective.

In 2022, for the first time there were no bus occupants injured on Halton's roads. However, this is probably a reflection on the decline in bus travel over recent years. It is worth noting that although 36 bus passengers were injured in the Borough in 2016, one collision on A557 Rocksavage Expressway accounted for 28 casualties (all slightly injured).

All the collision data we receive from Cheshire Police is via the STATS19 recording system. The forms the Police use provide almost 100 possible causation factors as well as information regarding casualty types, weather, road conditions etc. This information is vital to properly direct a road casualty reduction programme although it is disappointing that too often Cheshire Police do not provide causation factor details to Local Authorities, only the Department for Transport.

Looking at the latest STATS19 data for Halton we can see that the overwhelming majority of collisions are caused by some form of driver error. Only a handful of collisions detailed issues with the road surface or layout as an accident cause and most of these related to temporary measures at roadwork sites. Below is a table illustrating the most common causation factors on Halton's roads last year:

Motor vehicles / cyclists – all casualties			
Causation factor	2013-2017 average	2021	2022
Driver or rider error or reaction	176	91	86
Driver / rider failed to look properly	108	39	52
Injudicious action	59	26	32
Impairment or distraction	35	29	28
Behaviour or inexperience	39	21	28
Driver / rider failed to judge other person`s path or speed	49	30	24
Driver / rider careless, reckless or in a hurry	22	12	20
Loss of control	32	28	18
Exceeding speed limit	13	12	16
Distraction in vehicle	7	5	15
Pedestrians – all casualties			
Pedestrian only	22	13	8
Pedestrian failed to look properly	16	6	4
Pedestrian failed to judge vehicle`s path or speed	5	2	2
Pedestrian impaired by alcohol	2	2	2
Crossing road masked by stationary or parked vehicle	2	1	2

Most factors have shown a decline over time, however there have been concerning rises in collisions involving drivers exceeding the speed limit or being distracted in the vehicle. Halton Borough Council continues to engage with Cheshire Police with regards speed enforcement and this year a fixed speed camera on A562 Speke Road has had an upgrade and a red light / speed on green camera has recently been installed at A557 Watkinson Way gyratory, a collision 'hot pot'. In addition, we are also working with the Cheshire Road Safety Group in identifying new mobile camera sites at locations experiencing speeding issues.

Since the Covid19 pandemic there has been a noticeable shift in traffic patterns, with less acute peak hours but more traffic on roads during traditional daytime off-peak periods. Changes in work and shopping patterns (more people working from home and the rise in shopping delivered to home) may account for some of this, but it is also clear that traffic associated with the 'school run' continues to grow, bringing its own related road safety issues.

Engineering measures designed to enhance safety around schools continue to be a priority and our Road Safety team continue to engage with schools and Police on a weekly basis to encourage safer behaviour from all road users and discourage inconsiderate parking, which often negatively impacts road safety.

In addition, our brilliantly run School Crossing Patrol service, celebrating 70 years in the U.K., continues to provide children with safe places to cross. Last year over 3500 children in the Borough crossed the road each day with the help of our Patrols.

The Department for Transport recommend using collision rates as the best metric to judge the relative safety of a Local Authority's highway network. The number of casualties per billion vehicle miles is usually lower for Councils with a more rural character, lower rates of deprivation and higher lengths of motorways relative to size. Halton does not really tick any of these boxes yet in comparison with rates both regionally and nationally we have performed well over an extended period:

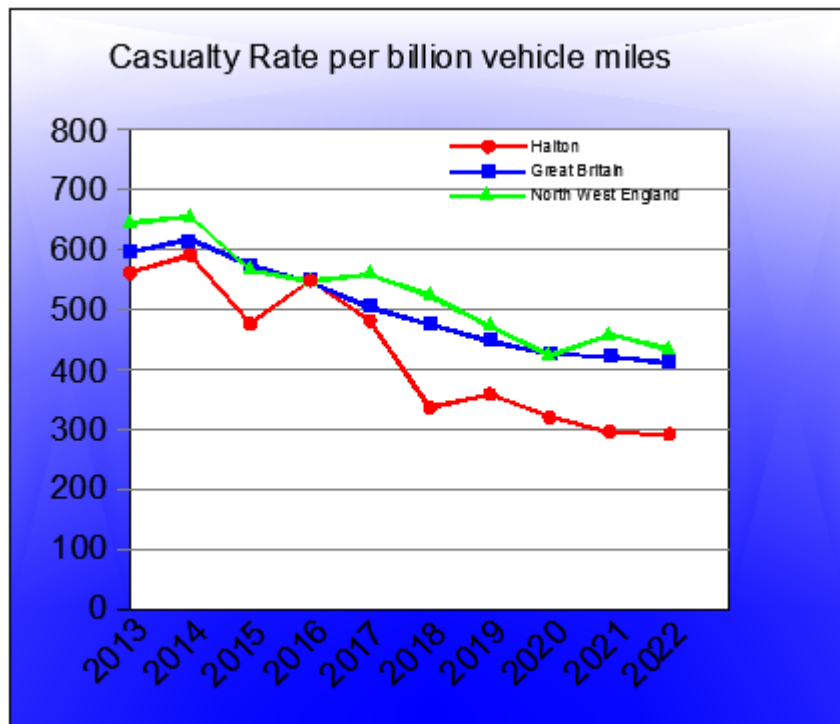


Figure 3 – Casualty rate (all severities) per billion vehicle miles 2013 – 2022

Since 2016 the casualty rate has substantially decreased and despite the ongoing budgetary constraints the safety of our roads continues to improve. Lack of resources mean a scaling back of engineering interventions but in recent years a greater number of small-scale engineering schemes have been devised to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. Add to that the sterling work of our Road Safety team in their education, training and publicity programmes, together with a greater engagement with Cheshire Police in targeted enforcement campaigns, there is no reason why further gains cannot be made in ensuring the safest road network possible.