



Quick releases

Cycling news and views from around the UK

CAMPAIGNS



Left: Morever. Right: Robert Spanning



Road safety reboot

On 7 January, the UK government published a road safety strategy to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on Britain's roads, with a target to reduce that number by 65% by 2035, writes *Duncan Dollimore*. I say Britain because, although Scotland has a separate road safety framework and Wales is developing a road safety partnership plan, many aspects of the strategy apply across Great Britain – but not Northern Ireland.

Another strategy. More targets. It's easy to be cynical of government announcements, but this one really does matter. We've had ambitious targets to reduce casualties before, and between 1997 and 2010 they fell by nearly 50%. Of course, things don't happen just because you have targets

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and strategies, but they tend to move things up the political agenda. We haven't had a strategy for 10 years or casualty reduction targets for 15, and in that period 22 European countries made more progress than Britain in cutting casualty numbers.

For many years, Cycling UK has been pushing for casualty reduction targets, a new road safety strategy and many of the proposals outlined in the new plan. Some of those proposals involve consultations on the details, and we'll share more on those in the coming weeks. But the proposals for new vehicle-safety technologies (which are mandatory in the EU but not GB), tougher penalties for certain motoring offences, and new licence requirements and testing for younger and older drivers, all reflect our policy asks. There's also a clear statement that the whole strategy reflects the internationally accredited 'safe systems' approach, a key component of which is safer speeds. So inherent in the strategy is the recognition that we need to reduce vehicle speeds.

The strategy isn't perfect. There are things missing that should be there, including on Highway Code promotion (see 'A missing piece for safer streets', right). But the government just made road safety more of a priority than it has been for a decade.

cyclinguk.org/road-safety-strategy

A missing piece for safer streets

This road safety strategy is a huge step forward. It includes lots of measures that you've helped campaign for over many years. But there's one thing that's missing: there's no plan for Highway Code promotion – even though the majority of people still aren't aware of the new rules from 2022. Important updates like minimum distances for passing cyclists and rules on who has right of way at junctions aren't being followed, simply because people don't know about them. With 2026 marking four years since the changes, it's time to fix that.

Will you send a quick message to your MP and ask them to press the government to finally communicate the new rules properly to the public? Visit the website to contact your MP now: bit.ly/cyclinguk-missing-piece-safety