

Road Safety Parish Council Toolkit



Introduction

Dear Parish Council,

This Toolkit summarises what East Sussex County Council (ESCC) is responsible for within road safety, what we can realistically deliver with available resources, and why we are not always able to meet residents' requests.

The Road Safety Team (RST) fulfils the council's statutory responsibility to investigate crashes on the county's roads, and put measures in place to prevent future crashes, as set out in the Road Traffic Act 1988. We want to be realistic about what we can achieve as resources must be prioritised to reduce road casualties.

The public highway is one of ESCC's most visible responsibilities, and road safety is therefore often at the forefront of residents' minds. The RST receive thousands of enquiries each year and they are a vital contact point for the public, district, borough, town and parish council, county councillors, and MPs.

[The Road Safety web content](#) provides residents with a range of information on issues that they may consider reporting and explains how we prioritise the numerous requests we receive for traffic calming and other road improvements. Quarterly updates of actions from enquiries are also added and this allows customers to check the status of enquiries.

Roads are essential to our everyday lives and affect most, if not all, of our residents. We all use them and depend on them. Unfortunately, collisions still occur in our county in which people are still being killed or injured. However, whilst the majority of incidents are caused by driver behaviour, injuries and fatalities are not inevitable. The last few decades have demonstrated that effective and comprehensive road safety strategies, focusing on education, enforcement, and engineering, reduce these incidents and the associated casualties and fatalities, despite increasing traffic levels. The responsibility that ESCC has to further reduce these is one the authority takes very seriously.

I would welcome any feedback that you have.



Cllr Claire Dowling



How to use the Toolkit

The Toolkit has been designed to make the document as easily accessible as possible for navigation.

Throughout the document, including the contents section adjacent, you will see blue hyperlinks that will either take you to the relevant section of this document or to the necessary external source of information. These have been included to save you time and ensure you access the required information as quickly as possible.

Please note that if you experience any technical difficulty or discover 'broken links', these should be reported to Traffic.Safety@eastsussex.gov.uk

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Common Misconceptions

Reducing speed limits reduces speed

The speed at which a driver travels is influenced by many factors. These include road layout, weather conditions, traffic flow, driver age and familiarity with the road. The speed limit is therefore only a part of a driver's assessment of the road. Speed limits are therefore most effective when they reinforce a driver's perception of what is a safe speed to proceed. More information is available within the [Speed Limits](#) section.

Roads are dangerous

Dangers on the road network occur when road users do not consider the multitude of influences that are present. Roads are benign structures that cause no potential threat to a member of the public.

Someone has to be killed before action is taken

All concerns brought to the attention of the Road Safety Team will be assessed by an experienced officer and, where appropriate, improvements introduced. When considering how ESCC assesses and prioritises road safety concerns it is important to consider the wider policy and operational context, including the County Council's Local Transport Plan, and the processes and criteria followed when setting the annual Capital Programme for Local Transport Improvements, the Annual Road Safety Programme, Community Focused Road Safety and the Speed Management Programmes.

Each year, the team identifies sites that have the most crashes resulting in injury and put in place a programme of works to reduce the number of casualties on these roads. We do acknowledge that many residents wish to see preventative rather than reactive measures

put in place, however, for the Annual Road Safety Programme we have to prioritise sites where people have been killed or seriously injured.

All fatalities on the roads are investigated by the Police as an unlawful killing until such time it can be determined otherwise. ESCC is informed immediately by the Police if they identify any highway issues that may be relevant to the services we provide so that appropriate action can be considered.

ESCC has a statutory duty to identify where crashes (that cause injury) have occurred. Limited funding means priority must be given to sites with significant crash records, where improvements can be made. This ensures that our resources are being directed to those sites with greatest need, prioritising casualty reduction.

Typical costs of highway infrastructure

The introduction of new infrastructure on the highway in East Sussex is often very expensive and underestimated by the public who only see the new installation (e.g. pedestrian crossing). Officer time, design and consultation costs, the identification of utility/service infrastructure and construction costs are, to many residents, hidden costs that they would not consider.

Please see below some typical costs associated with some more common improvements:

- Vehicle Activated Signs: £15,000 – £30,000
- Zebra crossing: £100,000 – £200,000
- Puffin Crossing: £170,000 – £250,000

The reason for the variation in costs is that no two sites are the same. This results in varying levels of design requirement, consultation

Common Misconceptions

processes and additional work required prior to the installation of new highway infrastructure.

Difference between road maintenance and road safety

While it is noted that maintenance issues can contribute to road safety concerns, the general distinction between the two functions is:

Maintenance is the term applied to a range of activities undertaken to fulfil our statutory duty to ensure roads maintainable at public expense are safe for the public to use. Please see examples below.

- **Reactive maintenance:** response to inspections, complaints or reports such as filling in a pothole
- **Routine maintenance:** surface patching, cyclic maintenance such as grass cutting or gully cleaning
- **Programmed maintenance:** surface dressing or resurfacing
- **Winter maintenance:** gritting, or clearing snowfall
- **Emergency response:** response to flooding, tree clearing or oil spills

Road Safety relates to how road users interact with the highway and other road users. It seeks to influence driver behaviour to reduce the incidences of collisions resulting in personal injury as a result of driver error or inappropriate action.

Revenue generation from motoring offences

It is often cited that fines from motoring offences, such as speeding, are available to highway authorities to spend. Other

than revenue generated through on-street parking fines, all fines are retained by central government.

HGV prohibitions will stop HGVs using a route

Whilst a local highway authority is able to prohibit, restrict or regulate the use of roads within their area, there are limitations to how effective these can be.

The prohibition of HGV movements is permitted for structural or environmental reasons. A structural prohibition would only relate to a structure (e.g. bridge or culvert) that was not able to safely support a vehicle over a specified weight. Prohibited vehicles are permitted to use the road up to the structure but not proceed over/under it. Environmental restrictions are wider reaching but do not prohibit vehicles that have legitimate access to land or property adjacent to the road. This permits deliveries to business and domestic premises within the restricted area.

Many reports of HGVs within areas covered by HGV restriction therefore have a legitimate right to be there. In addition, once an HGV has legitimately entered an area covered by a restriction, they are able to exit that area in any direction they require. They are not limited to exit by the route they entered.

Therefore, the consideration of HGV restrictions is a complex process and should any restriction of access be considered appropriate, the implementation requires careful planning that considers wider implications of any restriction and whether the cost of the restriction and level of signing required can be justified in comparison to the impact the restriction might have.

Road Safety Team

Analysis

The Road Safety Team (RST) undertake several key tasks to ensure that ESCC fulfils its statutory responsibility. Among these are:

- Annual identification of all sites on our road network that have had at least four crashes where person(s) have been injured within the previous three-year period.
- Assessment of such sites to identify which of these sites have a potential for reducing the number of crashes by engineering methods.
- As a consequence, ESCC implements at least 24 infrastructure schemes on identified high risk sites or routes to improve road safety.

An example of this type of project would be the Camber Road between the A259 at Rye and the county boundary. A scheme was introduced to improve the traffic signs and road markings to be self-explanatory, so drivers are provided with a consistent and reliable message that allows them to understand the local environment and the alignment of the road, amending their behaviour accordingly.

Liaison with Sussex Police

It's the service's duty to co-operate with Sussex Police as part of their formal investigations into deaths occurring on East Sussex public highways. These investigations are on the assumption that, until proved otherwise, all deaths are unlawful and the authority as a whole, or individuals within the authority, may be guilty of committing an offence. Any actions undertaken by an individual officer may also be considered within the context of professional liabilities and those actions of the authority as a whole could come under scrutiny within legislation which looks to identify culpable conduct that leads to a person's death.

The RST, therefore, ensures that any work undertaken by ESCC, is duly considered in the context of safeguarding all road users whilst protecting the reputation and integrity of ESCC.

Road Safety Team

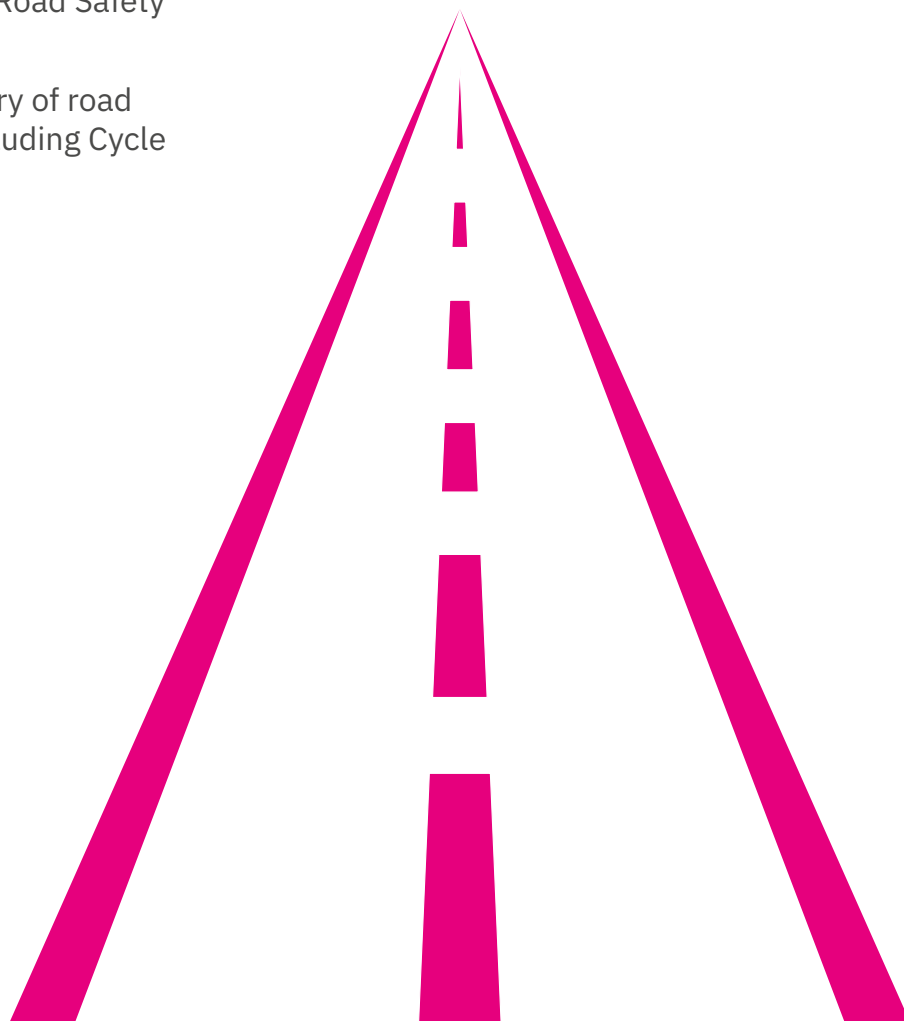
Information and advice

With the aim of reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured in East Sussex, part of the ESCC's statutory duty is to provide information and advice relating to the use of roads. We deliver this road safety education through the Sussex Safer Road Partnership (SSRP), in order to maximise our impact in this area. This forms the basis for the SSRP delivery plan which seeks to produce a coordinated targeted response to identified 'at risk' groups. The team represents the SSRP and ESCC at the local Community Safety Partnership Road Safety Groups.

The service oversees the delivery of road safety training programmes including Cycle Training

First point of contact for road safety enquiries

The RST are often the first point of contact for enquiries and the team undertake the initial assessment of all road safety concerns and refer any identified areas of concern for prioritisation under the Local Transport Plan Integrated Capital Programme. They represent ESCC at [Strengthening Local Relationships](#) meetings with local town and parish council.



Killed and Serious Collisions

A collision in which someone is killed or seriously injured (known as a KSI) is a tragedy for everyone involved. Perceptions that road users may not be safe harms our sense of well-being and of community. It has been calculated that each collision including a fatality has a public cost of more than £2.5 million, including the impact on the family and local economy and demands on emergency services and local authorities.

East Sussex, in common with the majority of County Councils in England has historically had a KSI rate higher than the England average. There are several reasons for this including the proportion of rural roads and absence of motorways (statistically the safest). For the three-year period, 2021–2023, the average rate of KSIs for England was 44.3 per 100,000 of the population, compared to a rate of 66.0 for East Sussex, 61.6 for Dorset, 57.2 for Hampshire, and 57.1 for West Sussex. It should however be noted that it is difficult to make direct comparisons with other areas due to both methods of data collection and recording across police forces, and the differences in road networks and infrastructure.

Crash severity is recorded as the most serious injury occurring in an incident. This severity can be amended up to 30 days after the incident occurs. They are recorded to three levels:

- Fatal** where one or more road users are killed.
- Serious** where one or more road users is injured and retained in hospital as an ‘in-patient’ or any of the following injuries, whether or not they are detained in hospital: fractures, concussion, internal injuries, crushing, burns (excluding friction burns), severe cuts, severe general shock requiring medical treatment and injuries causing death 30 or more days after the collision.
- Slight** where one or more road users has an injury of a minor character such as a sprain (including neck whiplash injury), bruise or cut which are not judged to be severe, or slight shock requiring roadside attention. This definition includes injuries not requiring medical treatment.

East Sussex Road Safety Behaviour Change Programme

The Road Safety Programme

With national figures showing the majority of collisions are caused by driver behaviour, ESCC has been working for a number of years with a range of partners to look at how we can inspire road users to change behaviour.

Working with The Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), and in partnership with other partners from the Sussex Safer Roads Partnership, ESCC has been running an innovative programme using data science to understand the causes of serious collisions and test interventions among priority groups that could potentially help to reduce the number of people being killed or seriously injured on East Sussex roads.

Evidence shows that the vast majority of KSIs result from driver carelessness or error. In addition, speed has been shown to be a significant factor in collisions. With this in mind, a number of the trials were aimed at people who have committed speeding offences, with the intention of reducing the rate of reoffending, and therefore (over time) reducing the risk of these drivers being involved in a serious collision.

East Sussex Road Safety Behaviour Change Programme

The Trials

A number of the behaviour change Initiatives and a trial to improve road safety through targeted infrastructure and speed management schemes at high-risk sites have delivered positive results.

Two intervention projects designed to inspire a change in driver behaviour on the county's roads have shown a reduction in reoffending among those caught speeding, while a third project has shown a reduction in the number of casualties at treated high risk sites.

Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) Trial

In the first pilot, a proportion of drivers received an amended Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP) letter and leaflet which simplified the form, addressed the misconception that collisions are out of drivers' control and explained the rationale behind speed limits. Over the six-month trial the rate of reoffending among this group reduced by 23 per cent compared to those receiving the usual letter and leaflet. This meant 170 fewer reoffences within six months than business-as-usual, or six per week, and this would translate to 560 fewer reoffences in Sussex if everyone in the sample had received the new leaflet and NIP. Last year, we shared the learning from this trial with the Home Office which was used to inform the development of a new National NIP.

The Anniversary Trial

The second involved drivers with a speeding offence within the previous three years receiving a one-off letter during the new year period reminding them of their offence and encouraging them to drive more safely. An eight per cent drop in reoffenders was

recorded among the 55,000 drivers who received the letter compared to those who did not. Over the six-month trial this meant 80 fewer reoffences than business-as-usual, or three per week.

High Risk Sites Trial

A third pilot focused on roads with the highest number of serious and fatal crashes and aimed to change drivers' behaviour by changing the appearance of the road and providing a consistent message to drivers along it. This included modifying road markings and signs, resurfacing, changing the speed limit and adding reflective posts. Results from 15 schemes have indicated a 49% reduction in the average number of crashes per annum and over a 60% reduction in the average.

DVSA Trial

A new pilot was launched in February 2024, in partnership with the DVSA, targeting newly qualified young drivers, who are at high risk of being involved in a KSI collision. The pilot will use existing DVSA communication channels to engage with new drivers in the six months after they pass their test. Communications are designed to address a range of behaviours which influence driving, re-enforce the legitimacy of speed limits and the costs of driving unsafely, with the aim of reducing speeding offences within the target group.

The results will be known in 2025.

How are decisions made?

In light of the volume of correspondence received from residents, Parish Councils, Councillors and MPs relating to requested road safety improvements throughout the East Sussex road network, a decision-making process has been designed.

All enquiries are assessed by a member of the Road Safety Team (RST) with any identified minor local improvements such as signing and road markings being funded from the team's small budget.

Larger scale schemes

The development and delivery of small to medium scale local transport and road safety related schemes that would require some design input are assessed against the outcomes that support the six objectives of the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) which was adopted in October 2024. These objectives are:

- Deliver safer and accessible journeys.
- Support healthier lifestyles and communities.
- Decarbonise transport.
- Conserve and enhance our local environment.
- Support sustainable economic growth.
- Strengthen the resilience of our transport networks.

The assessment criteria was approved at the September 2025 LMTE and road safety measures will now be assessed against this.

A priority list will be published in October 2025 detailing the sites which will be taken forward for a detailed appraisal.

The process for making decisions is technical and does require professional and trained analysis of the issues and concerns raised to the RST and has proved effective in making the roads within East Sussex safer.

Please be assured that responding to some enquiries with standard responses does in no way alter the current assessment of the issues and concerns highlighted to the team regarding road safety. The purpose of this type of response is to provide greater amounts of staff time for the assessment of the road safety concerns raised and the work associated with implementing suitable and necessary amendments to the road network should the assessment deem them appropriate.

Crash Data

The RST has access to Sussex Police crash data which enables them to identify the types of crashes that are occurring on our road network and those sites and routes of most risk. This information is usually updated by Sussex Police every month. The use of injury crash data ensures a consistent approach across the county and allows our limited resources to be targeted to those sites and activities that will produce the most impact in terms of casualty reduction for the benefit of all our residents. The reporting of crashes involving personal injury is fairly consistent across the whole national road network.

How are decisions made?

Community Focused Road Safety Schemes

The Council receives many requests for small scale road safety improvements to be made, including changes to speed limits, which do not meet the requirements to be considered as part of the Annual Road Safety Programme. To address these concerns £750,000 has been allocated from the Community Match underspend to deliver community focused road safety interventions.

Selected schemes address identified road safety concerns and are identified by considering a range of issues and specific site characteristics, weighted to define their relative priority. Current funding will enable a three-year programme of works to be delivered.

A two stage appraisal process is carried out for sites identified for consideration.

Section 278 agreements

We understand that whilst some schemes may meet our policies and criteria, they are not always classed as a priority for East Sussex County Council. These schemes are often important to the local community so the County Council may agree to authorise schemes carried out and funded by third parties via a Section 278 agreement. This involves the third party entering into a legal agreement with the County Council, agreeing that it will become the third parties sole responsibility to secure funding and oversee the project which can take several years to complete.

It should be noted that for a scheme to be approved, it will need to be considered by the Lead Member for Transport and Environment and be subject to a 3 stage Road Safety Audit procedure, which can result in additional costs even once the scheme has been built.

Speed Limits

A significant proportion of requests ESCC receives relate to requests to amend speed limits and the deployment of preventative measures (e.g. speed humps or speed cameras) to tackle speeding and anti-social driving. We acknowledge that Parish Councils are often contacted about this matter too. Should you receive future enquiries of this nature, please review the information provided below.

For speed limits to be effective they should be evidence-led, self-explaining to drivers and seek to reinforce a driver’s assessment of what is a safe speed to travel. They should encourage self-compliance.

The underlying aim should be to achieve a

‘safe’ distribution of speeds. The key factors that are taken into account when assessing local speed limits are:

- Existing traffic speeds
- Road characteristics and the surrounding environment
- Road function
- Composition of road users
- A study of the types of crashes, their severity, causes and frequency, together with a survey of traffic speeds, should indicate whether an existing speed limit is appropriate for the type of road and mix of use by different groups of road users or whether it needs to be changed.

(mph)	Road character and environment	Existing Average speed (mean)
20 (including 20 mph zone)	Reserved for town centres, residential areas or in the vicinity of schools where there is a high proportion of vulnerable road users in direct conflict with traffic.	Below 24mph for a signed only speed limit. Where average speeds are above 24mph, traffic calming measures will be required to reduce vehicle speeds.
30	Used in built-up areas with frontage access onto the road, such as urban streets and roads through villages and identified rural settlements with 20+ visible properties within a 600m length. On roads suitable for a 30mph limit, there will be a significant number of vulnerable road users in conflict with traffic.	Below 33mph.
40	Used in less built-up areas with properties set back from the road with frontage accesses indicating to drivers the need to slow down.	Below 42 mph.
50	On rural roads, dual carriageways or bypasses that have limited frontage development or are only partially built up.	Below 52 mph.

Speed Limits

The principal aim in determining appropriate speed limits should, therefore, be to provide a consistent message between the speed limit and what the road looks like, and for changes in speed limit to be reflective of changes in the road layout and characteristics.

East Sussex has a varied and complex road network where speed limits do change in accordance to the surrounding environment at regular intervals. The table below highlights where different speed limits could be applied in relation to a road's surrounding area.

Department for Transport (DfT) guidance states that:

“the aim of speed management policies should be to achieve a safe distribution of speeds consistent with the speed limit that reflects the function of the road and the road environment.”

This should imply a mean speed [average speed calculated by adding all vehicle speeds together then dividing by number of vehicles] appropriate to the prevailing road environment, and all vehicles moving at speeds below or at the posted speed limit, while having regard to the traffic conditions.”

This is the value in maintaining a consistent approach across the road network so drivers' speed can reflect the road type and environment wherever they are.

The DfT guidance states that **“speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards such as a single road junction or reduced forward visibility, for example, at a bend.”**

Whilst Parish Council may receive requests to reduce a speed limit due to safety concerns, it is often the case that the collision rate can be

improved through other speed management measures such as clear signing and road markings or visually narrowing the available carriageway.

These alternative measures should always be considered before proceeding with a new speed limit as they may be more effective or simpler to implement.

Should the amending of a speed limit be the most suitable approach to make a particular road safer, then the estimated decrease in injuries and fatalities that a change to a speed limit could cause is an important factor when considering a speed limit change.

Another consideration when setting a speed limit is what the road looks like to the road user. Drivers are likely to expect and respect lower limits and be influenced when deciding on what is an appropriate speed, where they can see there are potential hazards, for example outside schools, in residential areas or villages and in shopping streets.

The vast majority of East Sussex's rural road network is subject to the national speed limit. On many of these roads, the majority of drivers are traveling below – sometimes significantly below – the speed limit because of the characteristics of the road. This is especially evident on C and Unclassified roads where the characteristics include very narrow lanes, bends, junctions and accesses.

Speed limits are only one element of speed management. Local speed limits should not be set in isolation. They should be part of a package with other speed management measures including engineering and layout of the road that respect the needs of all road users and raise the driver's awareness of their environment. These measures should enable

Speed Limits

traffic authorities, such as ESCC, to deliver speed limits and actual vehicle speeds that are safe and appropriate for the road and its surroundings. The measures should also help drivers to be more readily aware of the road environment and to drive at an appropriate speed at all times.

It is important that traffic authorities and police forces work closely together in determining, or considering, any changes to speed limits. The full range of speed management measures, which include traffic signing, road markings, vehicle activated signs, road humps and regulated parking to name a selection, should always be considered before a new speed limit is introduced and speed limits should not be used to attempt to solve the problem of isolated hazards, such as a single road junction or reduced forward visibility, for example at a bend.

Contrary to many people's expectations, reducing a speed limit does not lead to an equivalent drop in actual vehicle speeds. As set out in the DfT setting speed limit guidance, analysis undertaken internationally and the ESCC's own experience indicates that introducing a lower, signed only speed limit will achieve a decrease in average speed of 1-2 mph. Furthermore, this is only where it is obvious to a driver why the speed limit has been reduced.

Where there is poor compliance with an existing speed limit on a road or stretch of road, the reasons for the non-compliance should be examined before a solution is sought. If the speed limit is set too low for no clear reason and the risk of collisions is low, then it may be appropriate to increase the limit.

If the existing limit is in place for a good reason, solutions may include engineering measures or changes to the road environment to ensure it better suits the speed limit to increase awareness of passing drivers.

The Speed Management Programme has an initial budget of £500,000, with additional on-going funding identified within future Capital Programmes. The Programme has assessed all A and B class roads within the county to ensure that the existing speed limits are the most appropriate for the road conditions and ensure that they are effective. 16 sites have been identified, 13 of which will see a lower speed limit and 3 will see measures introduced to improve compliance. The design, consultation and implementation will take place during 25/26 and 26/27.

Other considerations:

- The proposed speed limit needs to be appropriate in terms of the road environment and the likelihood of it being respected by the majority of drivers.
- The impact of traffic signs and road markings needs to be taken into account especially within rural areas.



Sussex Safer Road Partnership

What is it?

The Sussex Safer Road Partnership (SSRP) incorporates the three highway authority areas (ESCC, West Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Council), National Highways, East and West Sussex Fire and Rescue Services.

The Partnership's main purpose is to identify and collaborate on pan-Sussex road safety initiatives to reduce the number and severity of casualties across Sussex.

Partners work closely with Sussex Police to reduce the number of people killed or seriously injured on our roads.

The core activity of the SSRP is casualty reduction through:

- education of road users including cycle training and behaviour change programmes
- engagement with the public to positively change behaviour on the road
- road safety engineering schemes

Examples of recent activities delivered by the SSRP include the Mobile Phone campaign outlined previously, which was led by ESCC, and the Theatre in Education programme which targets year 7 (11/12-year-olds) and 11 secondary school children (15/16-year-olds) which commenced in September 2025.



Speeding enforcement

How do you request a speed camera?

Speed cameras are operated by Sussex Police Road Safety Team. There is strict government guidance on the use of speed cameras that relates to the number of personal injury crashes that have been reported to the Police where excessive or inappropriate speed was a contributory factor. This helps to ensure that cameras are only used to improve safety and are not seen as a means to raise additional revenue. The criteria for the consideration of a camera follow these guidelines.

Should a resident enquire about a speed camera being installed in their local area, please email Sussex Police's Road Safety Team at RoadSafety@sussex.police.uk

How do you report anti-social driving?

Speeding vehicle offences are a matter for police enforcement and should not be referred to ESCC.

However, their resources are relatively low for dealing with all traffic offences. Therefore, the Sussex Police has set up two schemes to enable residents to assist the police in targeting resources effectively and reducing anti-social driving behaviour across Sussex.

- **Operation Crackdown** has been set up to enable residents to assist the Police in targeting their resources and reducing anti-social driving behaviour. Drivers can be reported via the website at www.OperationCrackdown.org or via telephone on 01243 642 222. If a vehicle is reported through Operation Crackdown the Police will send out a warning letter to the driver. Reports are kept on file for a 12-month period, so higher levels of intervention can be exercised if repeat reports are received in respect of the same driver. Reports submitted to Operation Crackdown provide real evidence that enables the police to justify targeting their resources at specific locations.
- **Community SpeedWatch** – a national initiative where active members of local communities join with the support of the police to monitor the speed of vehicles using speed detection devices. Drivers exceeding the speed limit are recorded and reported through the [Operation Crackdown website](http://www.OperationCrackdown.org) for appropriate action to be considered by Sussex Police.

Signage

The RST often receive enquiries from customers about the addition or amending of road signs in relation to concerns they have about road safety. These can relate to speeding, perceived hazards in the local area including deer or direction signs. Should you receive an enquiry from a resident regarding signage, please review the below information

The [Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984](#) states that a “traffic sign” is an “object or device (whether fixed or portable) for conveying, to traffic on roads or any specified class of traffic, warnings, information, requirements, restrictions or prohibitions of any description”.

Highway Authorities are responsible for ensuring correct standards of signing on their roads and only they can erect traffic signs or permit their erection.

The use on public highways of non-prescribed signs which have not been authorised by, or on behalf of, the Secretary of State, is illegal.

Requests for new or additional signs will be considered by an experienced road safety professional to ensure that they conform to the relative legal requirements or follow national guidelines or best practice.

For a request for new, or amended, signage to be installed within East Sussex to be successful then it’s likely that the request would need to relate to an issue that is not readily apparent to a driver or is backed by a specific restriction or prohibition.

The latest guidance regarding suitable signage is available in [The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016](#).

The main types of traffic signs are:

Regulatory signs

Predominantly circular with a red border and include ‘Stop’ and ‘Give Way’ signs. These give instructions to drivers relating to an order, prohibition or restriction.



Warnings signs

Warning signs are triangular with a red border. Guidance on the use of warning signs states that they should only be used to alert drivers to a potential danger that is not readily apparent. To be effective warning signs should be used



sparingly so that their overuse does not desensitise drivers to their impact. There is a lot of pressure nationally to reduce the amount of sign clutter on our roads and with the majority of the county being within an area of outstanding natural beauty (AONB) or a National Park it is important to ensure that signage is kept to a minimum.

The Road Safety Team (RST) has an extensive knowledge about how warning signs should be used and when they are likely to produce a positive impact in terms of road safety. An example of this is that the RST receive many requests for deer warning signs but the practice of installing signs at all locations where deer are witnessed is unsustainable in terms of installation and maintenance costs, leads to an increase in requests and is of little benefit in terms of road safety.

Signage

Direction signs



Rectangular in shape prior to a junction/roundabout and chevron ended at the junction mouth. The colour of a direction sign is appropriate to the status of the road to which it relates (green background for the Primary road network and white background for other roads). The design of direction signs is based on sound principles that deliver a clear and consistent message in an easily read format that allows a driver to identify the turning they require in good time to position themselves safely. To be effective direction signing should be clear and not overpower a driver with too much information. The design and position of an effective direction sign is therefore important and requires an in depth understanding of the relevant rules, regulations and standards.

Vehicle Activated Signs

Vehicle Activated Signs (VAS) are devices that display traffic signs prescribed by legislation. Their use must therefore conform to the relative regulations and directions given by the DfT.

VAS only display the traffic sign to those drivers exceeding a programmed threshold. They should therefore only be used in support of standard static permanent signs that comply to the relevant requirements.



To ensure the avoidance of excessive installations of VAS, the Department for Transport (DfT) has issued guidance that safeguards their effectiveness thereby maximising their impact. This guidance states that VAS should only be considered when:

- There is an identified crash problem
- Inappropriate speed is a predominant factor in these crashes
- Standard traffic signing has not satisfactorily remedied the crash problem
- Safety cameras and/or engineered solutions would not be appropriate

We have an approved working practice for VAS (Appendix 1) based on the DfT guidance and national best practice which gives scope for their use in a range of circumstances. This is required to ensure that they are not overused and are only maintained and replaced at sites that meet the basic qualifying criteria. Conformity to the national guidance will ensure that VAS remain an important intervention that will have quantifiable road safety benefits targeted at those sites of greatest need.

Proportionate installation of VAS will also ensure that drivers recognise their importance and that they are maintained and replaced in line with agreed highways maintenance

Signage

policies. The average cost of installing a VAS is between £10,000 and £25,000 dependent upon the presence of a suitable power supply. The average life expectancy of a VAS is five to ten years.

Information signs



A range of signs used to provide information to a driver. They include signs for amenities, tourist destinations, car parks etc. They are only provided on traffic management grounds and are not permitted to advertise a particular business or attraction.

Applications for this type of signage should be sent to customer@eastsussexhighways.com

Temporary signs

Deer

The RST receives a significant number of requests for signage relating to deer each year. As the sites at which deer might regularly cross one year might change to the next, we make temporary 'Deer Crossing' signs available for use at locations where it's been identified deer presently are. These signs are put in for either three months, or for the duration of the rutting season. ESCC's deer specialist will decide the duration based on their knowledge.



Due to the likely movement of deer, temporary signs are more effective than permanent signs and more cost effective for the ESCC if liable for frequent movement.

Speeding



National legislation states how speed limits should be signed so that they are consistent across the country. Where there is a system of street lighting, which is common throughout East Sussex, legislation does not permit the use of 30mph repeater signs, whether fixed or painted on the carriageway. However, ESCC has designed a range of temporary black and yellow posters for use in roads where residents have raised concerns, but permanent signage isn't permitted.

These posters can be put up in areas where concerns have been raised and stay in place for around three months as any longer lessens their effectiveness.

Road Markings

The Road Safety Team receive regular enquiries from customers regarding the possibility of adding or amending road markings. This could be related to a speeding concern or vehicles obstructing driveways in their local area.

Please review the information below should you receive an enquiry from a resident regarding a request for such work to be undertaken by ESCC.

Road markings can provide a vital contribution to road safety by clearly defining the path to be followed, outlining hazards, separating traffic flow and identifying the road edge or centre on unlit roads. Road markings provide a continual message to drivers and can convey information and requirements to road users that may not be easily replicated by upright signs.

Road markings, which includes road studs

(commonly referred to as cat's eyes), are considered as a type of traffic sign and are therefore controlled by the same rules and regulations applied to upright traffic signs.

Whilst road markings are relatively inexpensive to provide, they do require continual maintenance and replacement as they become worn very quickly on heavily trafficked roads. They can also become less effective when snow or heavy surface water is present. Due to a driver's viewing angle, road markings are not effective over long distances. Their use must therefore be retained to those areas where they are most suited. They must also not be solely relied on to provide the necessary information to all drivers in all situations.

New or amended road markings can be considered but priority would be given to those sites with an identified road safety issue.



School Crossing Patrols

ESCC receives enquiries from concerned customers about school children’s safety and requests for school crossing patrols. Should you receive such a request, please review the information below.

Duties relating to School Crossing Patrols (SCP) are not statutory. There is no requirement upon an authority to provide SCPs but if they elect to do so they must follow the relevant legislation. The law gives a SCP, appointed by an appropriate Authority (ESCC) and wearing an approved uniform, the power, by displaying a prescribed sign, to require drivers to stop. They are therefore considered as a formal pedestrian crossing facility. SCPs operating outside these conditions have no legal power to stop traffic.

All SCPs must be trained. Legislation requires ESCC “to provide requisite training” for its SCPs. National guidelines issued [Road Safety GB](#) provides guidance about how a SCP service should be operated. Adherence to this advice covers the authority against any claims that may arise, satisfies any issues relating to professional competence and provides a defence in cases of litigation.

ESCC Policy

To ensure clarity and consistency, ESCC has an approved policy (Appendix 2) relating to the provision and management of the SCPs and this Policy adopts the national Road Safety Great Britain (RSGB) Guidance as the basis for operating the SCP service.

This policy ensures that patrols are provided at sites which meet the nationally accepted threshold based on the number of cars present at a location and the number of pupils crossing the road. SCPs are funded from the Road Safety Budget at sites that meet this

requirement. Sites outside this threshold are not funded by ESCC. However, the County Council will train, supervise and manage a patrol if a volunteer can be found or external funding is identified.

Management and Staffing

ESCC has a “duty to satisfy themselves of the adequate qualifications of persons appointed to patrol”. The School Crossing Patrol Supervisors handle the appointment of all patrols including Disclosure and Barring Service checks, full training, appointment support, supervision, site risk assessments, health and safety issues, ongoing support and liaison with the local school/community regardless of how the site is funded.

Recruitment is a major problem facing the SCP Service as the level of pay and hours of work limit the attractiveness of a SCP post. Existing post holders usually have an affinity with the local area or the school concerned. [Recruitment is therefore undertaken within the local community](#) and any support given by Parish Council will be appreciated.



Traffic Regulation Orders

This section regarding Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) should be reviewed prior to reviewing details regarding the topics [Heavy Goods Vehicles, Parking and Disabled Parking Bays](#) below.

If necessary, a Highway Authority, such as ESCC, is able to regulate, prohibit or restrict the use of the highway in their area on a permanent, temporary or experimental basis, by way of a TRO.

TROs are required to implement:

- parking places
- waiting, loading and unloading bays
- speed limits
- double yellow lines
- one-way streets
- turning bans
- prohibitions of vehicles
- vehicle weight restrictions
- bus and cycle lanes
- taxi ranks

The formal process required to implement a TRO stipulates that various stages of consultation need to be completed prior to any introduction on street. Any objections received during the consultation stage need to be considered by the relevant authority. All unresolved objections are required to be reported to Planning Committee for resolution.

This process is time consuming and protracted, taking anything from six to twenty-four months to complete. It also has a significant impact in terms of staff and financial resource. The progression of a TRO is therefore only considered by the Road Safety team if:

- There is an identified road safety issue
- The restriction or prohibition is likely to be self-enforcing
- It is required to facilitate an identified scheme as part of the Integrated Transport Improvements Programme

Heavy Goods Vehicles

ESCC is often made aware of concerns from residents, primarily in rural parts of the county, regarding Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using the road network in their local area. Should you receive concerns from a resident regarding this matter, please review the information provided below. Please review the section on [Traffic Regulation Orders \(TROs\)](#) before this page.

A significant number of the roads in East Sussex are not suitable for larger vehicles including HGVs but ESCC has very limited resources available for introducing TROs in order to limit HGVs from using these roads. It is therefore important that any TRO that we do progress is targeted at locations that offer the most benefit in terms of their contribution towards casualty reduction. As a result, the Road Safety Team would only be able to justify considering an investigation into a possible TRO for a weight restriction if there was a significant injury crash problem being caused by HGVs using the road in question.

We are unable to provide signage regarding HGVs simply upon request. Further to the rationale above, if we were to erect such signage each time we received a request, the signs would lose effectiveness. Upon each enquiry the team receives of this nature, the named route is assessed and if deemed appropriate, a TRO will be considered.

However, the introduction of a TRO is only possible if a more suitable alternative route is available to HGV drivers.

Our policy on implementing weight limits also involves an assessment of the road concerned to ascertain whether it is physically and environmentally unsuitable for such traffic. One of the main factors that would be considered in the assessment is the layout of the road including how straight it is.

It is important to note that any weight restriction does not prevent large or heavy goods vehicles from using the road if they have a genuine reason to access the road to deliver to a local property or business. The restrictions are difficult for the Police to enforce as they would have to follow the vehicle all the way along the route without it stopping before they could take any action.

Following the adoption of the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) (2024 – 2050) in October 2024, the County Council has developed a Freight Strategy for the county which will be a supporting modal Strategy to LTP4. The draft Strategy has recently been out to public consultations that ended in June 2025. The responses to these consultations are now being reviewed. The outcomes and final draft strategy will be presented to the Lead Member for Transport and Environment in autumn 2025.

Parking

The RST regularly receives enquiries requesting we implement changes to parking in their local area. If you receive such an enquiry from a resident, please review the information below. Please review the section on [Traffic Regulation Orders \(TROs\)](#) before this page.

Parking control within the county is managed in two separate ways depending on the type of enforcement relevant to the borough or district. Sussex Police are responsible for the enforcement of parking restrictions unless it has been passed to the local authority by the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE).

CPE has been introduced within the Boroughs of **Hastings** and **Eastbourne** and the Districts of **Lewes** and **Rother**. The management of parking within these areas has been transferred to our [Parking Team](#) so if an enquiry brought to your attention relates to one of these areas, please refer the enquiry to the Parking Team.

Wealden District is not within a CPE area and is one of only 6 district / borough councils in England and Wales who have not adopted CPE in their area according to the Department for Transport in November 2021.

The implementation of parking restrictions needs to be backed by a TRO. There is a significant cost implication involved to ensure that any new restrictions are fully investigated prior to the completion of the formal legal process and depending on the level of signing and road markings that are required for the introduction of parking restriction will cost in the region of £10,000 to £20,000 when officer time is taken into account.

Sussex Police have publicly stated that they will not enforce parking restrictions within non-CPE areas unless there is an identified safety issue or a serious obstruction and then only when resources allow. This approach has been endorsed by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable as it is felt inappropriate that residents of those districts not covered by CPE should benefit from additional Police activity that is not available to the residents of the other nine district / boroughs in East and West Sussex and the city of Brighton and Hove that they are responsible for.

A review of the services provided by the Road Safety Team resulted in a decision not to progress with any new parking restrictions in Wealden. Areas identified within Wealden where parking restrictions could be supported on road safety or traffic management grounds will be held on file.



Disabled Parking Bays

ESCC regularly receives enquiries from customers requesting disabled parking bays are introduced either close to their home address or in areas that they regularly visit such as town centres. If you receive correspondence regarding this matter, please review the information below. Please review the section on [Traffic Regulation Orders \(TROs\)](#) before this page.

As a highway authority, we are able to 'restrict, prohibit or regulate the use of a road, or any part of the width of a road by vehicular traffic or by traffic of any class'. This gives us the power to introduce provisions such as disabled bays. However, the legislation requires that these are backed by a formal Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) – an expensive and time-consuming process open to objection.

[Adopted policy](#) states that disabled bays 'shall not normally be provided in shopping streets where there is a high demand for general parking to serve local businesses and any bay is unlikely to remain available for use by a specific applicant'. This does not stop such bays being provided where there is an established need. The reason for this stance is that disabled drivers already have national dispensation from some parking restrictions which would normally allow them to park within a time limited bay for an unrestricted time and on double yellow lines for up to three hours.

In recognition of the timescales that are required to introduce formal TROs and the impact this has upon our resources, we have adopted a policy that allows disabled bays to be provided outside an applicant's home on an advisory basis. This has been in place

for several years and has generally been very effective and the bays can be implemented quickly. This does not stop a bay being backed by a TRO if it is being abused by non-blue badge holders to enable enforcement of the restriction.

An application for a disabled bay may be made by, or on behalf of, a blue badge holder. Consideration of a bay is based on traffic management grounds and the applicant meeting some basic mobility restrictions.

Should a resident wish to apply for a disabled parking bay, please refer them to [ESCC website](#).



Other Duties

As well as topics highlighted above, the Road Safety Team has additional responsibilities. Please see below a summary of these.

Road Safety Audit

Road Safety Audit is an independent, systematic and proactive assessment of a highway improvement scheme to identify potential hazards, recommend mitigating action and record subsequent responses to those recommendations. The sole objective of the process is to ensure that operational road safety experience is applied during the design and construction process in order to minimise future road crash occurrence and severity once the scheme has been built. It helps to ensure that any improvements have been designed and built to the highest safety standards.

The need for Road Safety Audits is nationally recognised and it is a legal requirement on the Trans-European Road Network. Whilst it is not a legal requirement on the local road network, the audit standard issued by the Department for Transport is recognised as national guidance and best practice.

ESCC approved policy relating to road safety audits adopts the national standard with some minor amendments to meet the needs of the local road network. The adoption of a formal approach recognises that the full national standard is disproportionate for some of the minor schemes and improvements undertaken on our network whilst ensuring that an independent, documented process, undertaken by suitably qualified and experienced practitioners, is completed in the best interests of the authority and all highway users.

Strengthening Local Relationships

The Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meetings, held by parish and town Councils, are aimed at promoting effective two-way communication between parishes and towns, the local community and ESCC. SLRs aim to understand local issues relevant to all parties including the public highway. If requested, both Highways and the Road Safety Team (RST) attend meetings. If any other areas of County Council business are on the agenda, staff will direct the enquiry to the correct department.

East Sussex has 81 parish councils and 12 town councils, situated in Lewes, Rother and Wealden. ESCC attend SLRs of approximately 60% of all Town and Parish Councils each year.

SLR meetings are popular with town and parish councils. The openness of the meetings and appear to get a better understanding of the asset management approach taken by the highway service as well as the reasons behind decisions.

Other Duties

Cycle Training

Cycling is a healthy, sustainable, cheap and environmentally friendly means of transport or leisure activity. Cyclists are however vulnerable on our busy roads and it is therefore important that we prepare cyclists to enable them to stay safe and avoid injury.

The Road Safety Team provides a range of cycle training activities across the county. The bulk of our work is focused around the Department for Transport's Bikeability training programme.

Training courses for beginners to advanced level are offered at Schools, from our dedicated Cycling Centre based at the Eastbourne Sport Park or at sites in Hastings and Peacehaven.

RST also offer family based 'Whizability' fun events, adult cycle training, bike maintenance and cycle instructor training. We also undertake 'Wheels for all' cycle events aimed at children and adults with disabilities.

For details of our cycling activities and how to apply, please visit [County Council website](#).



Contacting Road Safety

Should you wish to raise a concern or forward correspondence sent to you by a resident, please report it online at the [East Sussex Highways website](#) or via email to Traffic.Safety@eastsussex.gov.uk.

Upon receipt, your enquiry will be assessed and then forwarded to the most relevant team.

Please refrain from contacting officers directly.



