

What Price Road Safety?



Proposals for reducing Guernsey's
road traffic collisions (RTCs)

STEPS
STEPS

Stop Traffic Endangering Pedestrian Safety

What Price Road Safety?

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In 2004 two people were killed and 200 injured on Guernsey's roads. Had this been the casualties in one major incident it would have made headline news. Because this is just the normal annual road toll in Guernsey it hardly gets a mention. Yet road traffic collisions (RTCs) are costly to the economy and the community and are wholly preventable.
- 1.2 Since STEPS was set up nearly four years ago we have concentrated our efforts on trying to improve pedestrian safety. More recently we have widened our remit to cover all road safety issues through our annual co-ordination of Road Safety Week, working with all the emergency services and other agencies in the island.
- 1.3 It is time to take some more positive initiatives in order to reduce the unnecessary death and injury on our roads. We would like to see a States strategy on road safety and a cross-departmental approach to tackling it, co-ordinated by the Policy Council. This paper aims to set out some of the challenges and proposes some solutions.

2. BACKGROUND

Guernsey's Road Traffic Collision (RTC) statistics (2004)

- 2.1
 - 680 reported road traffic collisions in Guernsey in 2004 (almost 2 a day) and we can assume that there were many others which went unreported
 - 2 islanders died
 - 32 islanders were seriously injured (16 of these were motorcyclists)
 - 167 islanders received minor injuries
 - 479 collisions resulted in damage only

Also:

- 101 incidents were attended by the Fire Brigade and of those **20** involved people trapped who had to be cut out of their vehicles (103 and 16 in 2003)
- The majority of RTC attendances at A & E are in the age range 18-34.

The cost of treating road traffic casualties

- 2.2 The cost of each **fatality** is considered to be in the region of £1,422,080.00
The cost of each **serious injury** is considered to be in the region of £166,340.00
The cost of each **minor injury** is considered to be in the region of £16,560.00

(emergency services; hospital & medical treatment; court & legal costs; loss of earnings; loss to the economy; tax & national insurance; social & human costs).

On this basis, Guernsey's costs for 2004 was £10,932,560.00 (see Appendix 1)

Clearly savings to the economy of this order could be made if preventative measures are taken to save life and reduce casualties.

The financial and social costs to the island of too many vehicles on the roads

- 2.3 Most islanders would agree (and this is borne out by tourists as well) that traffic is an issue in the island and traffic volumes, therefore, must have a bearing on the number of RTCs each year. Guernsey's traffic jams cause frustration and frustrated drivers are bad drivers.
- 2.4 There were 53,622 registered vehicles in the island in 2004¹. The volume of traffic and noise (particularly of some motor scooters) has a detrimental affect on all road users. Traffic blights communities and impacts on the quality of life.
- 2.5
- Attendances at A & E show that most RTCs requiring hospital treatment occur during the morning, lunch time and evening rush hours when traffic volumes are highest.
 - Parents' perception that it's too dangerous for their children to walk or cycle to school means that children's lives are being constrained, stopping them from independent travel and leaving them reliant on adults for transport. Parents drive their children to school so they add to the congestion.
 - As a result, children are growing up with the perception that driving is the only option. During their childhood many never experience the road from the viewpoint of a pedestrian or cyclist and so are much less likely to become safe drivers.
 - The car culture in Guernsey is being reflected in the health of islanders. In the 2003 "*Healthy Lifestyle*" survey 51% of adult males and 52% of adult women are recorded as being overweight. Stress due to transport difficulties (traffic jams and parking) came second to work stress in the same survey.
 - Air monitoring figures (*Sustainable Guernsey 2005*) show that the main source of atmospheric pollution in Guernsey is motor vehicle emissions. Background levels of nitrogen dioxide peaked in 2004, rising by 33% on 2003 figures.

A joined up approach to tackling the volume of vehicles on our roads is, therefore, essential if we are to reduce RTCs, improve quality of life and play a part in emissions reductions.

Proposals for a way forward

- 2.6 There is a danger that the States will be so immersed in the need to save money in order to fill the black hole that all other initiatives will stop. We can improve road safety in Guernsey by **investing** in some areas in order to **save** resources in others.
- 2.7 Professionals working in the field of road safety generally agree that the solution to reducing road casualties requires a three pronged approach:
- Education
 - Enforcement
 - Engineering

¹ figures from the Traffic Section of the Environment Department

3. EDUCATION

- 3.1. A number of agencies are involved in road safety education in schools, with the majority being undertaken by two Police Schools Liaison Officers. (see Appendix 4) However, the tables below show that education needs to be targeted much more towards **adults** as well as children.

Classification of injured people (Guernsey Police Annual Report 2004)

	Fatal	Seriously injured
Adult pedal cyclist		1
Adult pedestrian		6
Drivers	1	6
Juvenile pedal cycle		1
Juvenile pedestrian	1	
Motorcycles		16
Passengers		1
Total	2	32

Contributory factors associated with RTCs in Guernsey in 2005²

Contributory factor	%age of RTCs
Driver lost control	28%
Ignored vehicle right of way	20%
Speed	11%
Driver's faculties impaired	6%
Learners	6%
Ignored sign	5%
No signal given	2%
Ignored pedestrian right of way	1%

38% of incidents were hit and runs (other vehicles, walls, earth banks/ hedges etc.)
(See Appendix 5 and 6 for more tables)

- 3.2 The Guernsey Police Annual Report 2004 shows that drink driving offences are down by 2% which would seem to indicate that the considerable effort being put into drink driving campaigns is paying dividends.
- 3.3 The RTCs in November 2005 (the month in which STEPS ran Road Safety Week) were just **44**, compared with 74 in October and 58 in December. (See Appendix 6) We would like to think that our campaign did make islanders take care during the month, although since we do not have previous years' statistics we cannot prove this. It's worth investigation.
- 3.4 **If Guernsey could put the same resources into educating all road users throughout the year to follow the highway code (and the traffic laws of the island), we might start to have some impact on the annual RTC statistics.**

² STEPS analysis of raw data from the Guernsey Police for the last quarter of 2005 (September – December)

- 3.5 **Proposal 1:**
Re-introduce the post of a full-time civilian Road Safety Officer (RSO)³
(offset cost by releasing some time from two police officers for other duties)
- 3.6 STEPS put a proposal to the Traffic Committee in 2002 for the re-introduction of a full time Road Safety Officer in Guernsey, to take on the major educational role. The previous RSO worked not only with schools but also extended his work into the community at large. There was, for example, a regular weekly column in the Press which continually drew people's attention to good practice.
- 3.7 Whereas RSOs were originally police officers, (as was the case in Guernsey), today they are almost all civilians (Jersey has a civilian RSO), as it is generally accepted that with classroom road safety activities, the uniform creates a barrier between the tutor and the children.
- 3.8 We believe that the value of a **full-time professionally qualified** RSO must be preferable to the present arrangements, and this could release the police Schools Liaison Officers to undertake other duties.

- 3.9 **Proposal 2:**
Develop a Guernsey Speed Awareness Course and use this as an option when sentencing speeding motorists – particularly for those well over the speed limit

- 3.10 There is no doubt that a number of **serious injuries** in RTCs in Guernsey are due to **speeding**. The fact that the Fire Brigade had to attend 20 incidents in 2004 where people were trapped in their vehicles seems to confirm this. Indeed, the Police Chief Officer's 2003 Annual report stated:

“Excessive speed is a major factor in serious road accidents”

- 3.11 In the UK speeding motorists in several counties are now given the option of either receiving three points on their licence or attending a Speed Awareness Course. The majority opt for the course.

In a recent study of 1,000 drivers in the UK it was found that after the course fewer than 1 in 12 re-offended.⁴

- 3.12 **Proposal 3:**
Introduce a register of qualified driving instructors

- 3.13 This item was included in the Traffic Committee's Integrated Road Transport Strategy, which was approved by the States on 20th February 2003 (item 13). New drivers should be taught by professionally qualified instructors. Existing instructors should be given time to qualify.

We urge the States to implement this proposal in order to raise driving standards.

³ **Cost: £25K - £40K depending on what responsibilities are required + associated costs**

⁴ **TheTimes 10.5.05** Note: DriveTec UK does many of these courses – www.drivetech.co.uk

3.14 The following two proposals, while not being strictly educational, nonetheless would serve to deal with road casualties which occur through youth/inexperience on the roads.

3.15 **Proposal 4:
Raise the minimum age for motor scooter riders from 14 to 16 in line with Jersey and the UK**

3.16 Recent research has shown that the safety conscious segment of the brains of teenage boys remains underdeveloped until after they have passed the minimum driving age (17 years). (*Sir John Whitmore, Daily Telegraph 3.12.05*)

- 3.17
- An analysis of raw RTC data from the Police for the 4 month period September – December 2005 shows that **13 riders of under 50cc motor scooters** were involved in RTCs (5% of the total RTCs during this period).
 - A & E statistics over the past 5 years show **81 children aged 14** were admitted as a result of a RTC incident as against 7 children aged 13. The 2004 figure for 14 year olds (22) was almost double that of 2003 (12). Unfortunately the statistics do not categorise the type of road user, but the fact that there is such a huge increase at aged 14 would indicate that these children are probably scooter riders. It is certainly worth investigating.

3.18 Under the heading of Road Safety in the Traffic Committee's Integrated Road Transport Strategy was the following proposal:

"Driver licensing policies to be reviewed particularly in relation to age"

Almost 60% of islanders who responded to the consultation document were in favour. The States approved this item on 20th February 2003 (No. 14).

3.19 We believe the above proposal needs to be seriously considered in order to reduce road traffic casualties among children.

3.20 **Proposal 5:
Introduce P plates (probationary plates) in a bid to reduce RTCs amongst novice car drivers**

3.21 Research shows that 1 in 5 new drivers will have an accident in their first year of unsupervised driving.⁵ Guernsey's A & E statistics (over the past 5 years) show high casualty rates (particularly of males) in the age groups 18 & 19 and 20 to 24.

3.22 Australia and Canada have a graduated licensing system for a novice driver which ensures that they drive carefully during their first two years - otherwise they are in danger of having to re-take the test. ([See Appendix 4](#))

3.23 We believe that the Environment Department is considering P plates and we would fully support the introduction of them in Guernsey.

⁵ Autocar Magazine 2002

4. ENFORCEMENT

- 4.1 There is no doubt that tough enforcement acts as a deterrent. (Drink driving is an example where the message is getting through and the tough sentencing is acting as a deterrent). However, we are well aware that the Police Force is under strength and has difficulty in both recruitment and retention, and therefore resources are severely restricted. We also know that offences such as criminal damage are increasingly taking up more police time.
- 4.2 The public, however, want better traffic management and more enforcement. As a pedestrian safety group we want to see a **zero tolerance** approach to some of the illegal practices which potentially can endanger vulnerable road users and stop people from walking. Legislation with regard to moving and stationary vehicle offences, which have a detrimental affect on road safety, needs to be enforced rigorously.
- 4.3 STEPS, with the help of members of the public, reported over 3,000 pavement parking incidents during the past two years. (See Appendix 2)
- 4.4 We, therefore, welcome the Police's Strategic Plan for 2005-2009 which shows that what we are suggesting in this document is in line with their objectives:

“The Island Police Force has set an annual target to decrease collisions. This not only involves the vigorous enforcement of legislation, but must also involve education and partnerships with other agencies to make our roads safe for all users.

Police Officers must be encouraged to use every means available to them to discourage inconsiderate or illegal parking, un-roadworthy vehicles and poor driving.”

- 4.5 Given more important policing priorities, however, we do not believe that the Police can achieve these objectives with their present resources. In the 2004 Police Annual Report, for instance, there were 22.81% fewer fixed penalty tickets issued by the Traffic section. (See Appendix 3)

We would, therefore, like to put forward the following proposals:

- 4.6 **Proposal 6:
Introduce a UK style licence penalty points system in Guernsey**

- 4.7 There are a number of drivers in Guernsey who are persistent offenders and who consistently ignore the traffic laws in the island, thus endangering all road users.

We believe that the Police would support the introduction of a penalty points system in Guernsey (and we understand that the Chief of Police in Jersey is also in favour)

4.8 **Proposal 7:
Extend Guernsey's fixed penalty scheme to include other road traffic offences and increase the range and value of fines substantially**

4.9 Extending the fixed penalty scheme to include other road traffic offences would reduce costly court time and police preparation time. We believe that the Home Department might be intending to do this and we would welcome such a move. We understand the value of Fixed Penalty Tickets (FPTs) is under consideration.

4.10 We urge the Home Department to increase the fines **substantially** in order to provide a real deterrent. It is well known that people park illegally on a daily basis and take a chance. If they are fined they treat it as paid parking.

4.11 **Proposal 8:
Fund the Home Department's Traffic Section from some of the fixed penalty fines collected**

4.12 In 4.4 (above) we have stated that we do not believe that the Police will be able to achieve their strategic objectives given their current staffing difficulties. For example, we understand that there are currently only two full time and two part-time traffic wardens.

4.13 If we could feed some of the revenue from fixed penalty fines back into the Home Department it would be possible to increase the traffic team⁶.

4.14 **Proposal 9: Option 1:
Increase the number of Traffic wardens** - by giving them better status and pay; make it a comprehensive and island-wide operation, and extend their duties and hours

4.15 Police RTC statistics for 2005 (January to August) show that 43% of collisions take place in St. Peter Port. We need better policing in the residential streets of the Town.

4.16 Alternatively, more comprehensive cover could be achieved at no cost to the tax payer by Proposal 9, Option 2 (below)

4.17 **Proposal 9: Option 2:
Outsource all parking operations to a private company:** With profits split between the States and the private company.

4.18 The outsourcing of police escorts in Guernsey has been very successful. In London and many other UK cities parking has been decriminalised and is now the responsibility of the Local Authority.

Cutting the number of deaths and injuries on our roads is a responsibility we all share. We should encourage islanders to respect the Guernsey road traffic laws.

⁶ Salary of a Traffic Warden between £18,739 and £20,631; Police Constable £23,770 - £33,025 (after 10 years) + associated costs

5. ENGINEERING

5.1 Road engineering has an important part to play in road safety. We need to reduce **road danger** for all types of road users (but particularly for children).

5.2 **Proposal 10: Resources should be re-directed to the Environment Department and the Traffic Engineering section of Technical Services in order to put into place measures which will reduce the dangers on our roads.**

5.3 Some of the proceeds from increased fixed penalty fines (which we have previously suggested should go back to the Home Department) might be shared with the Environment Department to resource the engineering improvements.

5.4 STEPS welcomes Target 16 in the 2005 Police Plan:

Collision “Hot Spot” information to be made available for targeting of resources. Data will be collated to allow managers, in partnership with other agencies, to take action to reduce accidents at frequent collision sites.

5.5 The recent 3 year programme to replace the traffic lights in the island with new state of the art sensor lights, including pedestrian phases, is just one example of how safety and traffic flow can be improved for the benefit of all road users.

5.6 STEPS would like to see more safety improvements such as:

- Improvements to street lighting at zebra crossings (we know that the Environment Department is committed to do this)
- A review of the speed limits island-wide (which was in the Traffic Committee’s Integrated Road Transport Strategy), and in particular, reducing the speed limit in the lanes
- Wider use of reflective studs and reflective material on traffic islands and proper maintenance of existing safety critical road markings to aid night driving

5.6 The Police statistics for 2005 now give us much more information on when and where RTCs occur. We need to act upon this information.

5.7 **Proposal 11: Re-direct more resources to the Environment Department to enable them to enhance the scheduled and school bus services.**

5.8 We have already mentioned in section 2.3 the cost to the island of too many vehicles on the roads – the health costs and the dangers to vulnerable road users. Reducing the volume of traffic would go a long way to reducing RTCs.

5.9 Guernsey’s bus service is a real success story – more and more islanders (and school children) are using the buses. We urge the Policy and Resources Department to increase the Environment Department’s allocations so that we can build on this success story.

6. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Education:

- Re-introduce the position of a civilian Road Safety Officer (RSO)
- Develop a Guernsey version of the UK's Speed Awareness Course
- Develop a register of qualified driving instructors
- Raise the minimum age of motor scooter riders from 14 to 16
- Introduce P plates for novice drivers

6.2 Enforcement

- Introduce a UK style licence penalty points system in Guernsey
- Extend the fixed penalty scheme to include other road traffic offences and increase the range and value of fines substantially
- Fund the Home Department's Traffic section from some of the fixed penalty fines collected
- Consider 2 options as a way forward for increasing enforcement of parking offences

6.3 Engineering

- Re-direct resources to the Environment Department and Traffic Engineering Department of Technical Services in order to hasten road safety improvements
- Re-direct more resources to enhance the scheduled and school bus service

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 We have argued that the States should have a strategy on road safety and a cross-departmental approach to tackling it, co-ordinated by the Policy Council.

We have outlined the cost of RTCs to the economy and the community.

To reduce these costs we want to see preventative measures taken, with investment in three areas:

- Education
- Enforcement
- Engineering

We urge the States to take steps to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on our island roads.

March 2006

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Appendix 1

Cost of road traffic casualties in Guernsey

		Cost of each incident*	Total Cost
		£	£
2	Fatalities	1,422,080.00	2,844,160.00
32	Serious injuries	166,340.00	5,322,880.00
167	Minor injuries	16,560.00	2,765,520.00
			<hr/>
			<u>10,932,560.00</u>

*each figure is per person, per incident, and these are 2003 figures calculated by the UK's Department for Transport (DfT)

The figures are based on those for built up roads other than motorways with speed limits of 40mph or less

Highways Economics Note No. 1

2003 Valuation of the Benefits of Prevention of Road Accidents and Casualties

www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_033570.pdf

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Appendix 2

Incidents of vehicles parked on/blocking pavements reported to the police over the past two years

Total number reported 3,030

Number of vehicles reported 10 times or over 31
(See Below)

Number of vehicles reported between 5 and 10 times 62

Analysis of vehicles reported 10 times and over

Reported 59 times	1
Reported 39 times	1
Reported 32 times	1
Reported 30 times	1
Reported 27 times	1
Reported 21 times	1
Reported 20 times	2
Reported 19 times	1
Reported 18 times	2
Reported 17 times	3
Reported 15 times	2
Reported 13 times	2
Reported 12 times	1
Reported 11 times	7
Reported 10 times	5
	<hr/>
	31
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Appendix 3

30,305 fixed penalty tickets issued in 2004 @£15	454,575.00
23,393 fixed penalty tickets issued in 2005 @£15 (N.B. 22.81% decrease in 2005)	350,895.00
Average 26,500 (Assuming that decrease in tickets issued is partially reversed)	397,500.00

If the Fixed Penalty fine (£15) had been increased by the Guernsey RPI for the last 20 years it would now be £35 and the revenue from the 23,393 tickets issued in 2005 would have been increased to £818,755.

The figures below are calculated using the average of 26,500 tickets.

	26,500 tickets at £35 £	Increase in fine income compared with average above £
Increase to £35 (Inflation increase)	927,500.00	530,000.00
Allowance for deterrent factor	Less 25% 695,625.00	298,125.00

	26,500 tickets at £60 £	Increase in fine income compared with average above £
Proposed Increase to £60	1,590,000.00	1,192,500.00
Allowance for deterrent factor	Less 33% 1,060,000.00	662,500.00

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Appendix 4

Notes on the Text

Road Safety Education (see section 3.1)

- Road safety education is currently carried out in schools by two Police Schools Liaison Officers. They also advise on the cycle proficiency scheme, working with parents and teachers, and they do all the proficiency tests. The Police highlights drink driving in the run up to Christmas and often in the summer as well.
- The Child Action Prevention Group within the Health Promotion Unit works with the Police on various initiatives (e.g. the new child seat belt law).
- Instructors for Compulsory Bike Training (CBT) are licensed by the Environment Department to carry out the training.
- Island Coachways also undertakes some road safety training (particularly with regard to safety around school buses).
- The Fire Brigade is increasingly being involved in road safety education
- Even STEPS did some road safety training in 2005 for Les Beaucamps students.

P plates (see section 3.20)

In Australia, all novice drivers must display “p-plates” for their first years on the road. This system is linked to a penalty points system.

Most provinces in Canada have a similar system for novice drivers (up to 2 years) which is not linked to penalty points. Amongst other additional restrictions upon novice drivers in Australia and Canada:

- They are subject to a lower speed limit
- They cannot supervise a learner driver until they have 4 years driving experience
- They (and their co-driver) must maintain a zero blood alcohol level whilst driving
- They are prohibited from/restricted when driving between midnight and 5.00 a.m.

Additionally, we suggest that the island’s road safety would benefit if there was a restriction for novice drivers (for the first 3-4 years) to small, lower powered vehicles.

Appendix 5

Analysis of raw data from the Guernsey Police of 145 incidents between September and December 2005 (Analysis by STEPS)

Type of road user	%age of RTCs
Cars	72%
Goods vehicles under 3 tonnes	7%
Pedestrians	5%
Motorcycles under 50cc	5%
Goods vehicles over 3 tonnes	3%
Motorcycles over 150cc	2%
Cyclists	2%
Cars (automatic)	2%
Bus	1%
Vehicle towing	1%
Motorcycle under 150cc	1%
Taxis	0.7%
Articulated	0.7%

Location	%age of RTCs
25mph speed limit area	33%
In a lane	16%
One way traffic	14%
T Junction	9%
X Junction	9%
Give Way	6%
Traffic lights	5%
Zebra crossing	2%
Roundabout	0.7%
Filter	0.7%

Weather Conditions	%age of RTCs	Pedestrians	%age of RTCs
Dark	26%	Pedestrian crossing road	6%
Rain	10%	Pedestrian on road	3%
Strong glare	2%	Pedestrian on pavement	1%
High winds	2%		
Snow/ice	1%		

Type of Collision	%age of RTCs
Side impact	50%
Head on	33%
Nose to tail	15%
Parked	13%
Skid	12%
Reversed	9%
Turned right	6%
Turned left	6%
Overtook	1%
Vehicle defect	1%

Appendix 6

2005 RTCs – data provided by the Guernsey Police

Guernsey's RTCs	2005	2004
Fatalities	2	2
Serious injuries	25	32
Minor injuries	166	167
Damage only	478	479
Total	671	680

Note – fatalities have remained the same (2 each year) over the past 4 years

Monthly Totals of RTCs

	No. of RTCs
January	52
February	52
March	54
April	59
May	58
June	57
July	70
August	60
September	52
October	74
November	44
December	58

Road Safety Week was in November

Note: the last 4 months of the year (September to December) was analysed by STEPS from raw data provided by the Police.