



Manifesto for Road Safety 2024

A Call to Action for the
Incoming Government





Every day, 5 people die on roads in the United Kingdom and many more are seriously injured. Annually over 30,000 people are killed or seriously injured on the UK's roads – the equivalent of a medium-sized UK town suffering a catastrophic burden of injury every year. The annual societal and economic costs amount to an astounding **£43.5 billion**.¹

Progress in reducing road traffic deaths and serious injuries in the UK has flatlined since 2010 – the UK lags behind other nations in improving road safety according to the International Transport Forum 2023 Road Safety Annual Report, and we are not on track to meet the United Nations and Commonwealth Decade of Action target to halve road deaths by 2030.

Working together, the road safety community is advocating the adoption of a targeted, prioritized, and deliverable action plan to get the country back on a trajectory to tackle this unacceptable toll of death and injury, with **a first 100-day programme of four actions for the next government**.

¹ RAS4001: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/reported-road-accidents-vehicles-and-casualties-tables-for-great-britain>

1

Develop and commit to a **National Road Safety Strategy** – with targets – focusing on prevention, protection, and post-collision response.

2

Establish a **Road Safety Investigation Branch** – to learn from incidents and prevent future tragedies, as we already do in the rail, aviation and maritime sectors.

3

Introduce **Graduated Driver Licensing** to support young drivers through their transition to independent driving.

4

Adopt the latest **Vehicle Safety Regulations**, as will apply across the EU in 2024, to mandate fitting as standard proven safety technologies for vehicles sold in the UK.



1 Implement a National Road Safety Strategy

The Road Safety Statement 2019: A Lifetime of Road Safety is the last national road safety strategy despite a commitment to publish a new strategy in 2021. We ask for:

- A new Safe System Strategy focusing on prevention, protection, and post-collision response - this proactive approach will not only save lives but will also be a major enabler of active travel and decarbonization, thus improving public health.
- Evidence-based targets for road casualty reduction, with a robust mechanism for tracking progress through key safety performance indicators. Where targets are being missed, road authorities should be provided with adequate guidance and funding to implement casualty reduction initiatives.

2 Establish a Road Safety Investigation Branch

In July 2022 the Government announced that a new independent body, similar to rail, air, and maritime accident investigation branches would be set up to investigate collisions on the nation's roads and inform future safety improvements by learning from incidents to prevent future tragedies. The announcement was widely welcomed – it is time the new body was established.

A Road Safety Investigation Branch, with the duties and the powers needed to investigate for cause and learning rather than blame and prosecution, would be a major contributor to developing further effective initiatives.



3 Introduce Graduated Driver Licensing

Graduated Driver Licensing should be introduced in Great Britain for younger drivers. In 2022, 4,935 people were killed or seriously injured in crashes involving at least one young driver. Countries like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand have supported young drivers through the transition to solo driving by initially limiting their driving in the riskiest situations, in particular carrying peer-aged passengers. The evidence is compelling and has reduced casualties from collisions involving 17- to 19-year-old drivers by between 20% and 40%.

4 Adopt world-leading Vehicle Safety Regulations

The United Kingdom was at the forefront of developing the European Union's General and Pedestrian Safety Regulations (GSR), which mandate a raft of proven safety features in vehicles, including technologies such as Automated Emergency Braking and Intelligent Speed Assistance. Since July 2022, GSR applies to all new vehicle models given type approval in the European Union and Northern Ireland and all new vehicle sales are required to comply from 7th July 2024. GSR has the potential to prevent up to 1,762 fatalities and 15,612 serious injuries in the UK, amounting to an economic value of around £7 billion over 16 years, at minimal cost, but is currently not being adopted in Great Britain.

The Government needs to replace the post-Brexit sticking-plaster approach to vehicle type-approval and implement a solution including the rapid domestic adoption of the GSR.



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Manifesto signatories:





Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS)
Albany House
94-98 Petty France
London
SW1H 9EA

admin@pacts.org.uk
07928 050742
www.pacts.org.uk
@PACTS