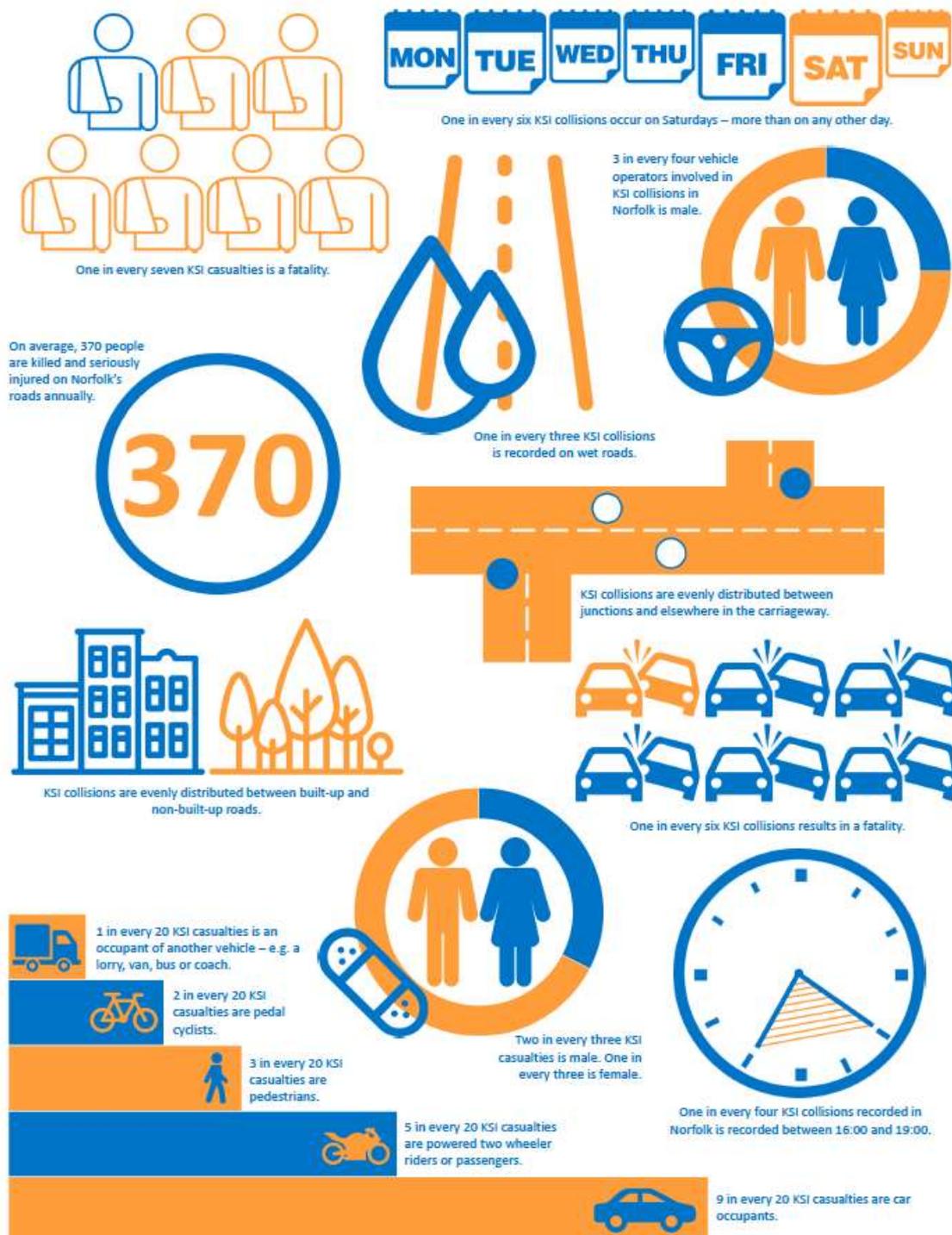


Road Casualties

Introduction

Casualties resulting from collisions on the roads represent significant challenges to public services, and have the potential to have serious, long-term impacts on those who are either injured or involved in collisions. Estimates from the Department of Transport place the value of preventing a fatal casualty and a serious casualty on the roads at £1.8 million and £200,000 respectively. By reducing the number of casualties on the roads, authorities can reduce demand on budgets and prevent potentially life changing injuries to local people.

KSI Casualties in Norfolk



Information based on casualty data for the six years between 2011 and 2015 inclusive // Icons provided by Freepik through www.freepik.com.

Summary

Norfolk's recorded road casualty performance before 2010 showed positive progress towards reducing the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSI) on the roads. However, since 2010 positive reductions in KSI have not been achieved, with stagnation and fluctuation in the number of KSI recorded each year.

Headlines

Each year around 2,400 people are injured as a result of collisions on Norfolk's roads – of which approximately 40 are killed and 330 more are seriously injured.

Norfolk's rate of KSI casualties per 100,000 residents has historically been higher than the national rate (Figure 2), which may be due to the rural nature of the county. Comparison with similar authorities (Figure 3) shows that Norfolk has generally performed better than both Lincolnshire and Suffolk, and has been outperformed by Gloucestershire and Somerset. Recorded KSI in 2015 resulted in Norfolk's worst performance against its comparators in six years.

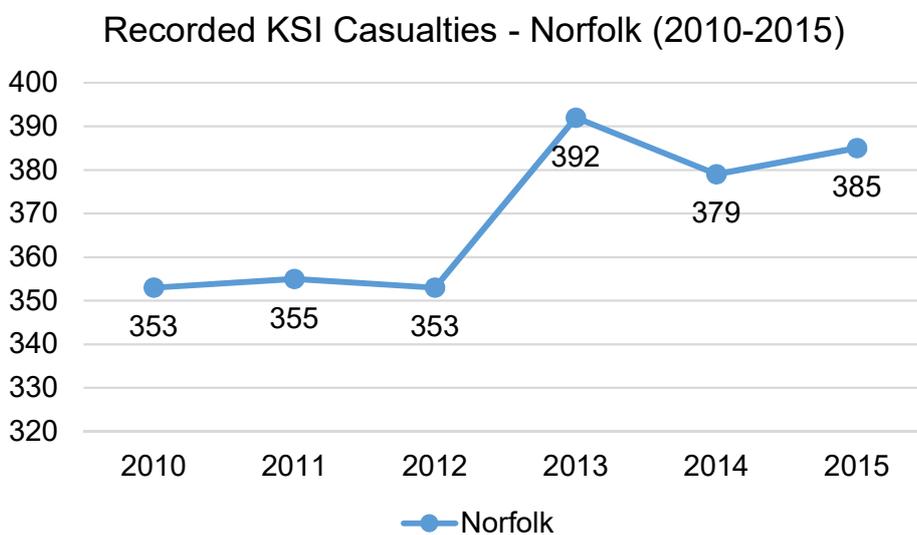


Figure 1

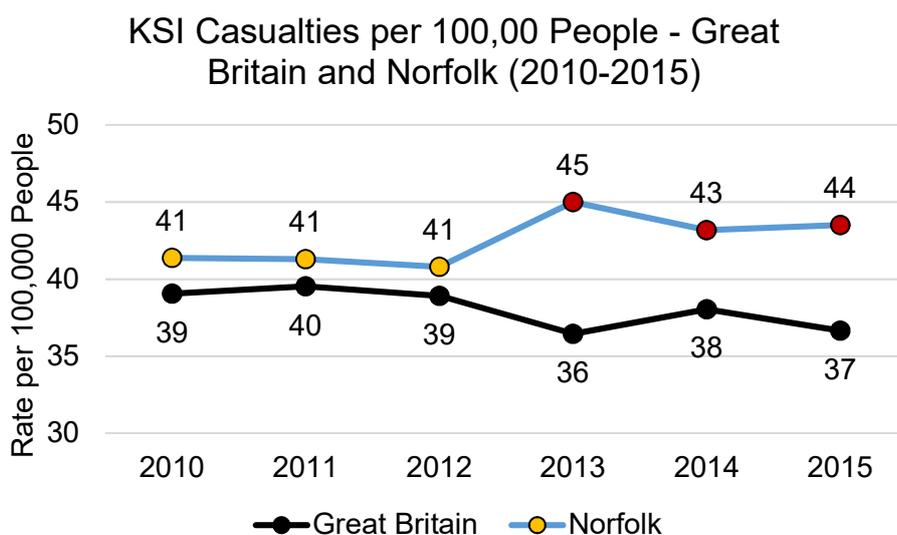


Figure 2

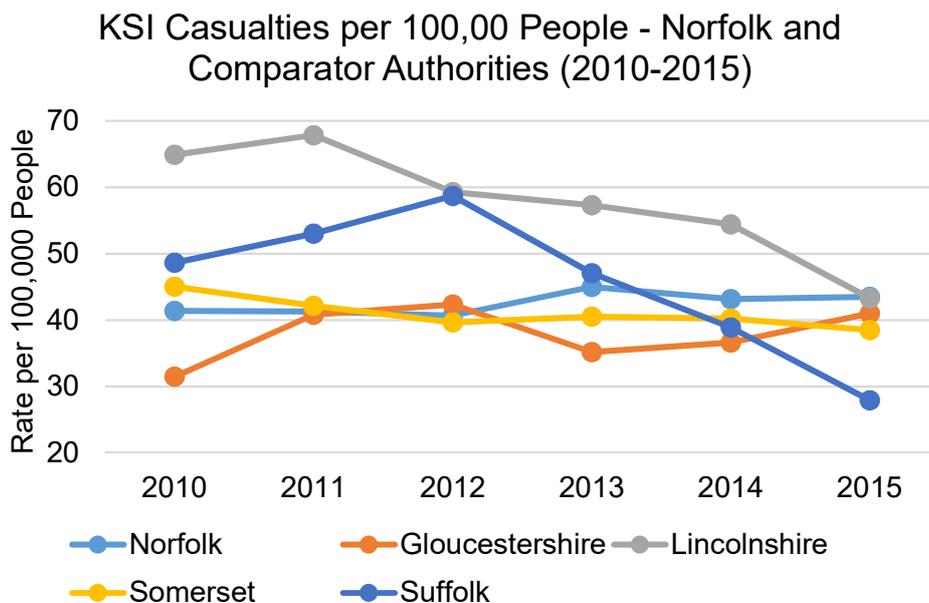


Figure 3

Car occupants account for the largest share of KSI casualties in Norfolk, with approximately 45% of those killed or seriously injured annually being drivers or passengers of cars. 25% of KSI casualties are riders or passengers of powered two wheelers (e.g. motorbikes and motorised scooters). A further 25% of casualties, defined locally as 'vulnerable road users', are pedal cyclists and pedestrians. Pedestrians account for 15% of KSI casualties annually and pedal cyclists account for 10%. 5% of KSI casualties are the occupants of other vehicles, including light goods vehicles (LGVs), heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), buses and coaches, agricultural vehicles, and mobility scooters.

KSI Casualties by Casualty Vehicle - Norfolk (2010-2015)

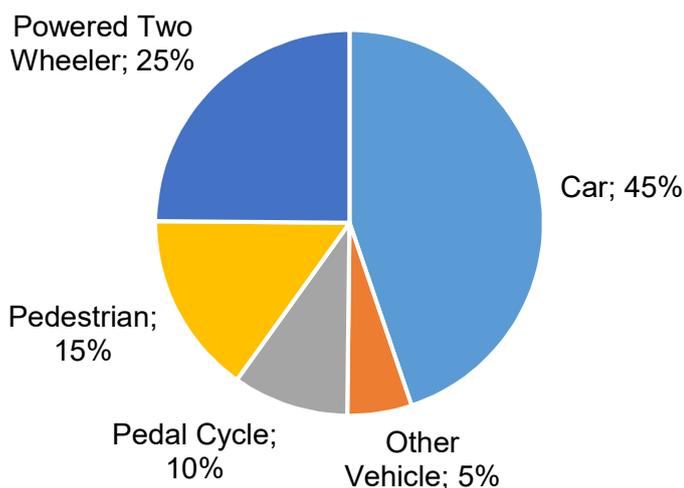


Figure 4

Burden of ill health

There are considerable costs associated with road accidents, the average medical and ambulance cost of a serious road casualty is around £13,800¹ and police costs are around £2,000. There are further costs of lost output, such as damage to property, insurance and admin, of around £27,000. Fatalities as a result of road accidents cost medical and ambulance services £5,100 on average, and £17,000 for the police².

If there were no KSI casualties in Norfolk each year the local health and social care system would save an estimated £5 million in ambulance and medical costs alone.

Social, environmental, population context

Motor vehicle traffic accidents are a major cause of preventable deaths and morbidity, particularly in younger age groups. For children and for men aged 20-64 years, mortality rates for motor vehicle traffic accidents are higher in lower socioeconomic groups.

According to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents³ unequal risk of road injury between different socioeconomic groups could be caused by differences in social environment, culture, education, work, and psychological factors which lead to safe or unsafe road behaviour. Those from the most deprived groups are much more at risk than those least deprived, and the difference between the two groups is increasing. Understanding the distribution of deprivation and different socio-economic groups within Norfolk can aid appropriate and effective targeting of road safety intervention schemes.

Current services, local plans and strategies

The public health strategy "Healthy Lives, Healthy People" (2010) highlighted the need to reduce road injuries in children and address the 'strong social and regional variations'. Reports relating to the earlier cross-government "Staying Safe" strategy such as the "Staying Safe: Action Plan" (2008) and "Accident Prevention Amongst Children and Young People - A Priority Review" (2009) address child road safety issues in more detail.

The Department for Transport's latest "Strategic Framework for Road Safety" (May 2011) draws together and updates the wide-ranging issues that will need to be addressed to reduce road casualties. The strategy also drops over-arching national targets in favour of a new proposed "Road Safety Outcomes Framework". The need for safer roads is also linked to the recent public health strategy, and existing government-backed initiatives, to increase "active travel" and physical activity.

The Norfolk Road Casualty Reduction Partnership currently leads on casualty reduction efforts in the county. The Partnership is a coalition of authorities and representatives from the public sector, including Norfolk County Council's Highways and Public Health departments, Norfolk Constabulary, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, and Highways England.

The Partnership specifically targets five key groups: younger drivers, older drivers, powered two wheelers, pedal cyclists, and pedestrians. Whereas younger drivers and older drivers are targeted because of their involvement in KSI collisions which result in injury both to themselves and others, powered two wheelers, pedal cyclists, and pedestrians are targeted because of their vulnerability on the road.

The Partnership targets these key road users through its dedicated subgroups, which meet regularly to create and carry out engagement strategies. The membership of each group varies, with members invited based on their experiences and expertise. Each group is supported by the dedicated data and information arm of the Partnership which provides regular updates on casualty reduction performance.

¹ In 2010 prices and values

² WebTAG: TAG data book, July 2016: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/webtag-tag-data-book-july-2016>

³ The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (2012). Social Factors in Road Safety: Policy Paper

Norfolk County Council continues to provide driver training through its dedicated casualty reduction team, and through the Norfolk Safety Camera Partnership. In addition, the team provides education services through schools covering a range of topics, including pedestrian safety, bicycle skills and in-car safety.

In addition, organisations such as Norfolk Constabulary and Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, continue to apply national messaging, such as the Fatal Four, and locally designed engagement strategies to achieve casualty reduction targets.

Voice – the perspective from the public, service users, referrers and front line staff

Norfolk County Council commissions an independent survey of Norfolk residents in order to benchmark public satisfaction with highways and transport. The National Highways and Transport Network Survey⁴ carried out annually by Ipsos Mori uses the opinions of more than 3,000 residents chosen at random to rate local authority services including those for walking, cycling, road safety and road maintenance.

Analysis of the 2014 National Highways and Transport Survey showed that Norfolk performed highly compared to other local authorities. Out of 28 similar county councils and larger unitary authorities, Norfolk ranked:

Overall – 3rd

Traffic management – 3rd

Condition of highways – 5th

Local bus services – 5th

Street lighting – 9th

Road safety education – 10th

Satisfaction with public rights of way – 25th

Road user groups are invited to be represented at relevant road casualty subgroup meetings held by the Norfolk Road Casualty Reduction Partnership. There is representation from the Diss Cycling Club, the Norwich Cycling Campaign, King's Lynn and West Norfolk Bike Users Group, Norwich Amateur Bicycle Club, as well as representation from charities and organisations including NNAB, Living Streets, and the Norfolk and Norwich Advanced Motorists (NNAM), East Anglian DriveAbility, the Norfolk Older People's Forum, and NORCAS.

Considerations for HWB and commissioner

The vast majority of road traffic collisions are preventable and can be avoided through improved education, awareness, road infrastructure and vehicle safety.

The Norfolk Road Casualty Reduction Partnership organisations have a shared target to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on Norfolk's roads. Following the formation of new local governance structures it is necessary that the strategic engagement and tactical delivery of interventions should be undertaken by a wider range of partners using the collective resources and opportunities available.

The current direction and governance arrangements for Norfolk strongly reflect the themes set out in the Government's Strategic Framework for Road Safety which called for a 'public health' style of approach for delivering road safety outcomes. There is on-going need to review strategic directions around casualty reduction, as exemplified in the following extract:

National research commissioned by PACTS in 2013 found that for pedestrians 'the majority of failings are down to simple inattention or carelessness and without improving respect for the roads and people's attention through education and training the most effective way to reduce these injuries would be to reduce vehicle speeds or provide better segregation'⁵.

This highlights that the board has a role to keep the strategic direction of road safety under scrutiny.

⁴ <http://www.nhtnetwork.org/nht-public-satisfaction-survey/home/>

⁵ Road Safety Analysis (2013). Stepping Out.

References and information

Reported Road Casualties Norfolk 2015

http://www.norfolkinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Reported_Road_Casualties_Norfolk_2015.pdf

Norfolk Road Safety

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/roads/road-safety>

Think! Norfolk

<http://www.think.norfolk.gov.uk/>

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