



In-Depth Road Fatalities Study Pedestrians in Scotland January 2015 – March 2024

Executive Summary and Recommendations

October 2025

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade there has been an overall downward trend in the number of people killed in road traffic collisions on Scotland's roads. Despite some increases in 2016, 2019 and 2022, overall, there have been positive changes towards a reduction in fatal casualties. Unfortunately, 2024 saw a notable rise in fatalities and it is imperative that Police Scotland and partners work together to address this and reverse this trend.

Scotland's Road Safety Framework 2030 (RSF2030)¹ has a vision to have the best road safety performance in the world by 2030 and a compelling long-term goal for road safety where there are no deaths or serious injuries on Scotland's roads by 2050. These outcomes align with the five pillars of the Safe System: Safe Road Use; Safe Vehicles; Safe Speeds; Safe Roads and Roadsides; Post-crash Response.

All road users are exposed to a variety of risks. The alignment of one or more risks can result in a collision. It is important, therefore, to understand the nature of collision causation, as it may be any combination of factors that result in a collision and any combination of factors that result in a fatality. A positive change in road users' behaviour can reduce the severity of the collision or prevent it from happening entirely.

Working in partnership to achieve the RSF2030 vision, Police Scotland and Transport Scotland instigated road fatality research and in-depth analysis of all factors relating to road traffic fatalities on Scotland's road network. The findings of the 'In depth road traffic fatalities report for the years 2015-2020' were published on 25th October 2023².

Recommendation 73 within the report states that:

“Further in-depth analysis should be undertaken on the currently available data set to identify trends and subsequent recommendations for pedestrians, motorcyclists, pedal cyclists and child fatalities.”

The number of pedestrian fatalities in 2024 indicates an increasing trend. In order to help address this, analysis has been conducted to:

- Identify fatal collisions involving pedestrians
- Identify the contributory factors that led to the fatal outcome of the collisions
- Identify the countermeasures that could have prevented the fatal collisions or reduced the severity of injury
- Explore pedestrians and road users in relation to specific contributory factors and countermeasures
- Make recommendations to assist in addressing identified themes and issues.

This report will focus on fatal collisions involving at least one pedestrian fatality during the reporting period 1st January 2015 to 31st March 2024.

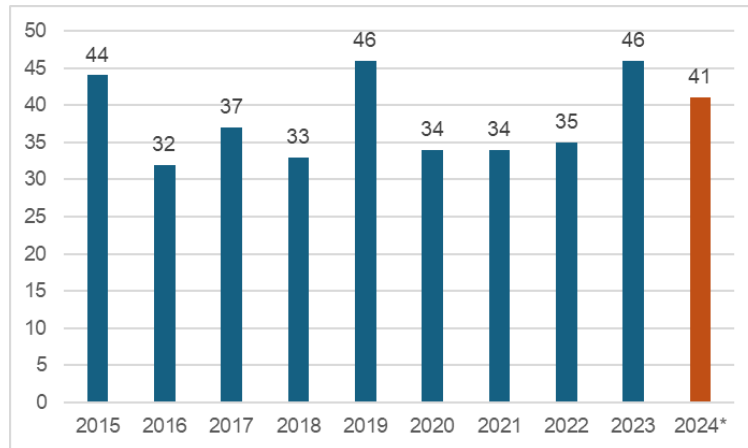
¹ [Transport Scotland - Road Safety Framework to 2030](#)

² [In-Depth Road Traffic Fatalities Report for the Years 2015-2020](#)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

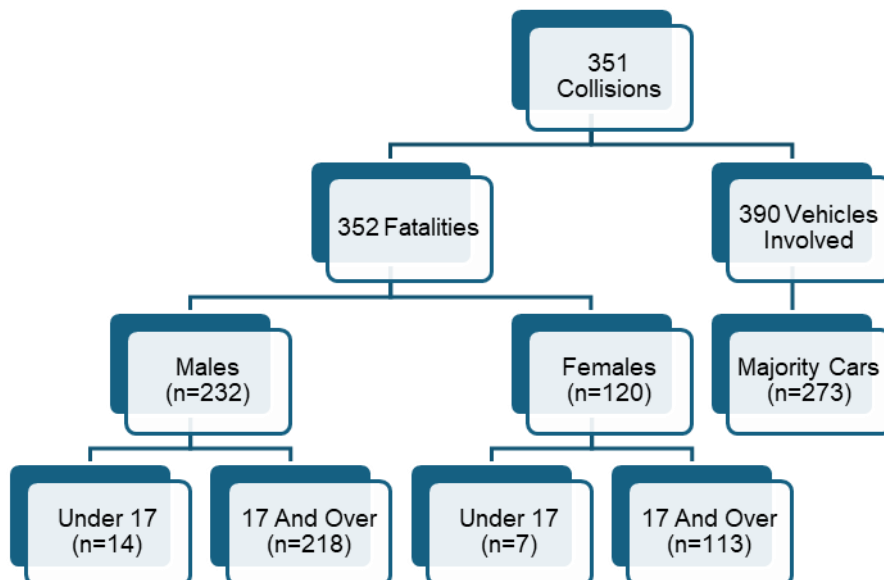
Between 1st January 2015 and 31st March 2024, there were 1,348 fatal collisions recorded on Scotland's roads, which resulted in the deaths of 1,445 people (352 of which were pedestrians, which equates to 24%). This highlights the vulnerability of pedestrians on Scottish roads.

351 of the collisions involved at least one pedestrian fatality. On one occasion more than one pedestrian was killed, therefore throughout this period 352 pedestrians have been fatally injured. On average, there were 37 fatal pedestrian fatalities per calendar year³. There were higher numbers during 2015 and 2019 – and of note, another spike in recent years, with an increase of 11 fatalities between 2022 and 2023. In addition, it is likely that pedestrian fatalities during 2024 are also likely to be higher than 2022, as displayed within Overview 1.



Overview 1: Pedestrian fatal casualties by calendar year (1st January 2015 – 31st December 2024*). Please note 2024 estimate included.

There were 352 pedestrian fatalities recorded during the reporting period, whereby the majority of pedestrians were male (66%). The majority of fatalities were adults, the largest proportion of which were over the age of 75, followed by the 56-65 and 36-45 age groups.



Overview 2: Pedestrian fatalities overview

³ Please note, the calendar year 2024 has not been included in the average calculation as data is only available between 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024.

OFFICIAL

There were 390 vehicles involved in the fatal pedestrian collisions. The majority of the collisions only involved one vehicle (n=317): the majority of which were cars, followed by goods vehicles 7.5 tonnes and over, and goods vehicles up to 3.5 tonnes.

The highest number of fatal collisions occurred within the west of Scotland when considering Police Scotland Command Areas; however, when broken down to local authority areas, the highest were recorded within Glasgow City (n=60), followed by Fife (n=28) and City of Edinburgh (n=28). The highest proportion of fatal collisions occurred on 'A' Class roads, and of note, higher numbers occurred on the A82, A96 and M8. Of note, over half of the pedestrian collisions occurred on a road with a 30mph speed limit.

Collisions most commonly occurred during the winter months (the highest recorded during January); and most commonly recorded between 1900 hours and 2059 hours, with a higher number of collisions noted during early morning and early afternoon too. A strong seasonal pattern can be observed as fatal collisions decrease during the spring and summer months.

Most commonly collisions occurred when pedestrians were crossing the road (57%). However, there were incidences where pedestrians were in the roadway, lying in the road, walking on a footpath or walking with traffic. Of note, 21% of the 'pedestrian – crossing road' collision types were recorded within Glasgow City.

There were 190 collisions where it was deemed the pedestrian had some responsibility for the collision, with the over 75 age group (19%) and 36-45 (18%) age groups being the most represented.

A review of the contributory factors relating to collisions, focused on pedestrians and vehicles involved separately. There were 1,126 contributory factors assigned to pedestrians, all of which are 'people' related. The five most commonly recorded were:

- 'Failed to look properly'
- 'Failed to judge vehicle's path/speed'
- 'Careless, reckless or in a hurry'
- 'Pedestrian wearing dark clothing at night'
- 'Impaired by alcohol'.

'Pedestrian-failed to judge vehicle's path/speed' and 'pedestrian-failed to look properly' were the most commonly recorded in the majority of local authorities.

Where the contributory factor 'wearing dark clothing at night' was attributed to a pedestrian (n=150), it was more commonly assigned to males (n=121).

83% of the pedestrians were deemed to bear some responsibility where the contributory factor 'dangerous action in the carriageway' was attributed. The 46-55 age group was the most commonly represented in relation to females; however, the majority were in the 26-45 age group for males.

Over half of the pedestrians were deemed to bear some responsibility in relation to the wrong use of pedestrian crossing – eight were female and 15 were male. The majority of the collisions occurred within an urban environment, with the City of Edinburgh and Glasgow City being the most commonly recorded.

'Failed to look properly', 'failed to judge others path/speed' and 'careless, reckless or in a hurry' were the most commonly recorded contributory factors assigned to vehicles involved in pedestrian fatalities, with cars having the highest representation.

During 2022, there were changes to the Highway Code in relation to the hierarchy of road users. Future analysis could explore if this has had a positive impact on pedestrian safety and a positive impact on the behaviour of all road users.

OFFICIAL

In terms of prevention and severity reduction, the collisions were assessed, and countermeasures were identified. Analysis of 'people' countermeasures (assigned to pedestrians) show that while 'awareness training of vulnerable road users' and 'improved vulnerable road users conspicuity' were the most frequently assigned countermeasures for collision avoidance, the confidence levels 'possible' and 'likely' were commonly recorded.

In relation to collision avoidance 'road' countermeasures assigned to pedestrians: 'add pedestrian crossing (if in urban area and appropriate)' and 'add appropriate barrier' were the most commonly recorded, followed by 'add or widen pedestrian pathway'.

Countermeasures in relation to speed ('add speed camera at locus' and 'reduce speed limit') were commonly assigned to vehicles involved in pedestrian collisions. In relation to 'add speed camera at locus', there were 21 collisions which had a higher confidence level assigned – of note, there were two collisions recorded on the A71, A725 and A82 respectively. The majority of these collisions occurred on a road with a speed limit of 30mph.

Recommendations have been developed based on the in-depth analysis of the 351 fatal collisions, with a focus on reducing pedestrian fatalities. Clusters have been identified where collisions have occurred within close proximity and it is recommended site visits are undertaken to establish suitable measures to reduce collisions. Analysis highlighted:

- Seven postcode districts where pedestrian collisions most commonly occurred (namely 'DD2', 'EH6', 'G13', 'G32', 'KY4', 'ML1' and 'ML3')
- Collisions which occurred on the A725 (Coatbridge), Dubbs Road (Port Glasgow) and A(M)823 which occurred within close proximity of each other
- Three collisions within Edinburgh City which occurred at, and near to the junction, where the A901 meets Leith Walk
- Collisions within Glasgow City centre where the contributory factor 'wrong use of pedestrian crossing facility' was assigned
- 'Failure to look properly' and 'failure to judge others path/speed properly' was commonly attributed to vehicles – whereby the collisions frequently occurred at junctions and crossroads
- Priority locations for consideration of speed reduction or the addition of barriers, pedestrian crossings, footpaths, street lighting or speed cameras have been provided.

Recommendations have been developed (aligned to the pillars of the Safe System) which aim to improve road safety and reduce pedestrian fatalities through:

- Education and awareness
- Legislation
- Practical actions.

Positive action from Police Scotland, Transport Scotland, partner agencies and all road users is required to reduce pedestrian fatalities on Scottish roads.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been identified through analysis and are presented for consideration:

SAFE ROAD USE

Education and Awareness

Category	Recommendation	Rec. Number
Pedestrians - General	Develop or continue to run campaigns on pedestrian safety - Develop a campaign with a focus on pedestrian safety during autumn and winter months. - Targeted campaigns should continue to be aware of seasonal differences for pedestrian fatalities. - Targeted campaigns should be aware of urban and rural settings, and issues relating to the different environments. - Targeted campaigns should highlight the importance of using pedestrian crossings safely. - Campaigns could consider re-enforcing the changes to the hierarchy of road users within the Highway Code.	Recommendation 1
	Pedestrian safety education highlighting the dangers of alcohol and drugs as they impair ability and judgement.	Recommendation 2
	Develop a Pedestrian Safety Campaign, with a focus on blind spots in relation to buses, coaches and heavy goods vehicles.	Recommendation 3
	- Develop a Pedestrian Safety Campaign, aimed at younger pedestrians (17-25), with a focus on highlighting the importance of travelling home safely after attending social events. 'Travelling home safely' after attending social events could be considered as a topic within the 'Curriculum for Excellence' as part of Road Safety – the senior pupils within High School could be a focus for this teaching.	Recommendation 4

OFFICIAL

Foreign Pedestrians	Continue to develop foreign pedestrian materials and distribute at relevant locations • Posters/materials could be developed and displayed in various establishments within popular tourist locations. • Materials should reinforce the requirement to look in the correct direction prior to crossing the road; and provide an overview of common road layouts, driving practices and the direction of travel of other vehicles. • Road Safety Scotland has a wealth of materials available in various languages that could be utilised (e.g. Chinese, French, German, Dutch).	Recommendation 5
	Distribute materials for foreign pedestrian at relevant locations – UK Airports and Ferry Ports • Transport Scotland to work in partnership with major UK airports and ferry ports (e.g. Newcastle) to display materials aimed at foreign pedestrians. • Materials should provide an overview of common road layouts and driving practices, including the direction of travel of other vehicles. • Materials should also be available on ferries servicing many of Scotland's islands which are popular with tourists, including Caledonian MacBrayne and Northlink Ferries.	Recommendation 6
Pedestrians	Use technology to inform • Road Safety Scotland has developed materials in relation to 'being a safe pedestrian'. The dissemination of these materials should be supported by Transport Scotland and Police Scotland and further utilised where appropriate.	Recommendation 7
	Develop materials targeting socially deprived areas • Campaigns and safety interventions for pedestrians, particularly those aimed at over the age of 75, should be targeted towards more socially deprived areas.	Recommendation 8
Action		
Vehicles – Alcohol/Controlled Drugs	Vehicle Safety, Drink and Drug Testing • Increased policing patrols by Police Scotland officers to undertake roadside stops, breath tests and drug wipes.	Recommendation 9

OFFICIAL

Pedestrians	Community Engagement – Safety Initiatives - Consideration should be given to engaging in a campaign to raise awareness of pedestrian visibility and encourage the wearing of high visibility clothing, particularly coming into the winter months and longer hours of darkness and poor visibility. - Passenger transport hubs (e.g. bus/train stations) could be possible locations to engage with pedestrians prior to, and at the end of, their journeys. - Consideration should be given to working in partnership with British Transport Police.	Recommendation 10
Pedestrians	Engage with pedestrians, particularly within cities/towns with a high level of footfall – deliver workshops in relation to buses, coaches and heavy goods vehicles.	Recommendation 11
Younger Pedestrians	Consideration should be given to engaging with younger pedestrians, with a focus on highlighting the importance of travelling home safely after attending social events.	Recommendation 12
Vehicle Drivers	- Increase driver awareness of vulnerable road users. Work in partnership (Road Policing, Local Policing, Corporate Communications and Road Safety Scotland) to develop a media strategy and campaign to raise awareness of pedestrians. Apply these in conjunction with other initiatives, such as enforcement and legislation, which can contribute to changes in attitudes towards safety risk over the longer term. - Campaigns could consider highlighting the importance of looking for pedestrians, prior to carrying out any driving manoeuvre. - Campaigns could consider focusing on the importance of looking for pedestrians at, or near to, pedestrian crossings.	Recommendation 13
Foreign Pedestrians	Road Safety Messaging – Foreign Pedestrians Liaise with ferry ports and airports to develop and display materials aimed at tourists travelling to Scotland with relevant road safety messaging.	Recommendation 14
Pedestrians - General	High Visibility Patrols Police Scotland to conduct high visibility traffic enforcement operations to target pedestrians' safety (with a focus on liaising with vehicles).	Recommendation 15

OFFICIAL

Pedestrians - General	High Visibility Patrols Police Scotland to conduct locally targeted and proportionate traffic enforcement where pedestrians are seen putting themselves or other road users in danger (with a focus on liaising with pedestrians).	Recommendation 16
Pedestrians - Education	Community Engagement – Safety Initiatives Consideration should be given to working with schools and communities to raise awareness of crossing the road safely and highlighting the importance of crossing at appropriate places.	Recommendation 17
Younger pedestrians	Focus Group – Young Pedestrians Police Scotland, Transport Scotland and appropriate partners should establish a ‘Young Pedestrians Working Group’ to ensure collaborative working to target and effectively prevent collisions amongst this group of pedestrians.	Recommendation 18
General	Licensed Premises Liaise with licensed premises. Develop campaigns, in partnership with licensed premises, to assist pedestrians travelling home after consuming alcohol within pubs, bars, restaurants and cafes. A pilot study could be developed, whereby free ‘glow in the dark wristbands’ (or similar) are provided to those on leaving the premises to increase their visibility.	Recommendation 19
Pedestrians - Education	Pedestrians accessing the M8 (motorway, Glasgow to Edinburgh) Consideration should be given to adding appropriate signs at locations where pedestrians can access the M8 between Glasgow and Edinburgh.	Recommendation 20
Supermarket Car Parks	Engage with Supermarkets in relation to supermarket car parks and pedestrian safe routes Consideration should be given to engaging with supermarkets, requesting that car parks are assessed to ensure that pedestrian safe routes are in place.	Recommendation 21
Legislation		
Younger Pedestrians	Education Continue to develop and deliver road safety education to children and young people - ensuring that high quality road safety information is shared at the earliest stages, with a particular focus placed on the risk of vulnerable road users.	Recommendation 22

OFFICIAL

Vehicle - General	Driving Standards – Vehicles (Drivers and Riders) Working in conjunction with the Driver and Vehicle Standard Agency and DVLA, the potential impact of the introduction of a minimum period of learning and a requirement to demonstrate experience in different driving conditions via logbooks could be considered.	Recommendation 23a
All Road Users	Driving Standards – Theory Test Renewal Certificate Working in conjunction with the Driver and Vehicle Standard Agency, consideration could be given to introducing a mandatory theory test every five years which would capture any changes to legislation, and any new legislation.	Recommendation 23b

SAFE VEHICLES

Education and Awareness

General	Vehicle Road Worthiness – Autumn/Winter Police Scotland could consider a ‘get ready for winter season’ campaign, encouraging all drivers/riders to ensure that their vehicles are roadworthy and prepared for the season ahead.	Recommendation 24
---------	--	--------------------------

Action

General	Tyre Safety Increased roadside stops by Police Scotland Roads Policing officers to check tyre conditions of vehicles to ensure safety and provide guidance where required.	Recommendation 25
Vehicles	Buses, Coaches and Heavy Goods Vehicles Liaise with bus, coach and heavy goods vehicle companies – request consideration to be given to reviewing their fleet of vehicles with a focus on ‘blind spots’ and identifying any improvements which can be made to the fleet.	Recommendation 26

Legislation		
General	Older Vehicles The Scottish Government should consider the development of a pilot scheme with a road safety focus on removing older and potentially less-safe vehicles from the roads.	Recommendation 27
	Learner Riders and Drivers Inclusion of tyre and vehicle maintenance training as mandatory for learner drivers should be considered. An understanding of the importance of ensuring a vehicle is roadworthy alongside practical training on practices such as checking and altering tyre pressure may have a positive impact. This could also form part of a theoretical and practical driving test.	Recommendation 28
Vehicle	Vehicle Technology The UK Government should consider the vehicle safety provisions within the EU's Vehicle General Safety Regulation (which includes advanced emergency braking system, intelligent speed assistance and distraction monitoring and alert systems) and adopt if deemed appropriate. This will ensure all new vehicles manufactured in the UK meet maximum safety standards and ultimately assist in preventing a potentially large number of road deaths.	Recommendation 29

SAFE SPEEDS

Education and Awareness

General	Speeding and Dangerous Driving Campaign Campaigns highlighting the dangers of speeding and other risky driving behaviours should be targeted in areas frequented by drivers/riders – both physically and virtually. This could include sporting events, social media, popular club meeting points and racetracks.	Recommendation 30
	Speeding – Offence Initiative Development of a National Speed Awareness Course and referral programme which drivers/riders who have been caught speeding must attend. Consideration should be given as to whether this would be offered as an alternative to prosecution or as a mandatory additional requirement.	Recommendation 31

Legislation

OFFICIAL

General	Speeding – Penalties Consideration should be given to increasing the penalties for speeding offences (heavier fines and increased points) and increasing the period of time points remain on a driver's licence.	Recommendation 32
	Speeding / Dangerous Driving – Penalties Consider increasing penalties or bans for repeat offenders of speeding/careless driving/dangerous driving, such as a graduated endorsement system with increased points for each offence.	Recommendation 33

SAFE ROADS AND ROADSIDES

Education and Awareness

Foreign Pedestrians	Signage A review of the signage within popular tourist locations should be undertaken to ensure it is sufficient. Regular usage should be made of matrix signs to display messages reminding pedestrians to use crossing facilities correctly. Consideration could be given to displaying this in different languages (e.g. Chinese, German, Dutch).	Recommendation 34
Action		
Partner Agencies	Partner Agency Site Visits Partner agencies to attend sites identified in this report where collisions have occurred within close proximity of each other and carry out assessment.	Recommendation 35
Partner Agencies	Partner Agency Site Visits – M8 Motorway - Partner agencies to assess M8 motorway, carry out assessment and add signage where appropriate to highlight the risks of accessing motorways to pedestrians. - Adding signs at each slip road along the M8, re-enforcing pedestrians are not permitted to access the motorway, could be considered.	Recommendation 36

FURTHER ANALYSIS

Fatalities Report	COVID-19 Impact On Pedestrian Behaviour Further exploration of the impact of Covid-19 on the impact of pedestrian behaviour, before and after lockdown and travel restrictions.	Recommendation 37
	Urban/Rural Exploration Further exploration of the fatal collisions which occurred within urban and rural locations: analysis of the seasonal patterns and differences to be conducted; analysis of the contributory factors attributed to collisions occurring within urban locations compared to rural.	Recommendation 38
Additional Analysis	Add Pedestrian Crossing Further analysis and research should be conducted on the stretches of road identified in this report for an addition of pedestrian crossing locations.	Recommendation 39
	Add Pedestrian Crossing (overpass and underpass) Further analysis and research should be conducted on the stretches of road identified in this report for an addition of pedestrian crossing locations (overpass and underpass).	Recommendation 40
	Engineering – Barriers Further analysis and research should be undertaken on the stretches of road identified in this report for the addition of a barrier. Other alternatives should also be considered if barrier implementation is unsuitable.	Recommendation 41
	Add or Widen Footpaths Further analysis and research should be undertaken on the stretches of road identified in this report for the addition of a footpath, or to explore if amendments can be made to the existing footpath. Other alternatives should also be considered if adding a footpath is unsuitable.	Recommendation 42
	Add Street Lighting Further analysis and research should be undertaken on the stretches of road identified in this report for the addition of street lighting. Other alternatives should also be considered if adding street lighting is unsuitable.	Recommendation 43
	Reduce Speed Limit Further analysis and research should be undertaken on the stretches of road identified in this report for the reduction of speed limit. Other alternatives should also be considered if reducing speed is unsuitable.	Recommendation 44

	Prevention – Safety Cameras Further exploration of identified sites in this report for the potential addition of a speed camera should be undertaken to establish if they would reach the minimum site selection requirements as per the Scottish Safety Camera Programme Handbook. Any sites identified as potentially suitable by demonstrating a collision and speed history should be assessed and prioritised. Consideration will be required as to whether a fixed, mobile or average speed camera system would be most appropriate. Consideration could be given to short term deployments of safety cameras.	Recommendation 45
	Glasgow City Further analysis and research should be undertaken in relation to the pedestrian fatalities within Glasgow City.	Recommendation 46
	Driving Under the influence of controlled drugs Further analysis and research should be undertaken in relation to gaining a better understanding of the social outlook on driving under the influence of controlled drugs by younger drivers.	Recommendation 47
	Pedestrian Distraction Further analysis and research should be undertaken in relation to gaining a better understanding of pedestrians using mobiles phones, headphones or similar device at the time of the collision.	Recommendation 48
	Analysis of collisions which occurred on roads, where the speed limit has changed from 30mph to 20mph Further analysis and research should be undertaken in relation to collisions which occurred on roads which are now subject to a 20mph speed limit, to gain a better understanding of the impact of reducing the speed limit.	Recommendation 49
	Analysis of collisions in relation to the change in the hierarchy of road users Further analysis and research should be undertaken in relation to the changes to the hierarchy of road users in the Highway Code. Future analysis could explore if this has had a positive impact on pedestrian safety, and a positive impact on all road users' behaviour.	Recommendation 50
	Zebra Crossing Site Visits Site visits to be considered on the stretches of road identified in this report relating to zebra crossings. Additional signage could be considered providing advice to all road users.	Recommendation 51