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**How much do road crashes cost where you live?  
ROAD SAFETY FOUNDATION ANNUAL TRACKING REPORT  
AND REGIONAL ANALYSIS**

- Analysis of 45,000kms maps the concentration of risk, social and economic loss
- Hampshire shoulders the biggest crash cost of all counties (£631m over 3 years)
- Kent (£554m), Lancashire (£544) and Essex (£530m) suffer similarly high economic costs
- Lowest crash costs are in Torfaen (£20m); Merthyr Tydfil (£23m); and Midlothian (£33m)
- Highways England handles the biggest single crash costs of any authority: £2.1bn over the 3-year period (see separate analysis)
- Most persistently high risk road in Britain is A18 Laceby to Ludborough in East Midlands/Yorkshire
- Britain's most improved road is the A70 Cumnock to Ayr in Scotland
- Half of all Britain's road deaths are concentrated on just 10% of roads - the British EuroRAP network of motorways and 'A' roads outside urban cores
- The largest single cause of death is running off the road: the largest cause of serious injury is at junctions.
- An estimated 2% of total GDP is lost in road crashes.

Analysis of the cost of crashes on the complete network of roads in British non-metropolitan authorities by charity The Road Safety Foundation, and sponsored by Ageas UK, finds huge disparity among the authorities. In the three-year period studied (2011-2013), four authorities - Kent, Hampshire, Essex and Lancashire – each suffered more than £0.5bn of economic loss on their roads from crashes resulting in death and serious injury alone.

Even for the authorities reported with the lowest economic loss per capita, serious road crashes alone are costing their economies £200-300 per capita: Caerphilly (£211), Torfaen (£219).

This year's Foundation report, *How much do road crashes cost where you live?* also highlights the regions with the lowest and highest risk roads and the most risky road in each region.

### **Top 10 most improved roads**

Britain's most improved road is the A70 Cumnock - Ayr in Scotland, which saw a 94% reduction in the number of fatal and serious crashes over time from 16 (2008-10) to 1 (2011-13). Interventions to improve safety as part of a rural route action plan included mobile speed cameras, variable message signs to prepare drivers for junctions, road re-alignments, junction improvements, cycleway extensions, upgraded gateways to urban sections, 20mph zones near schools, major carriageway resurfacing schemes, upgraded footways and a reviewed speed limit. All the measures implemented were aimed at reducing speed, crashes involving vulnerable road users, and crashes at junctions.

*A list of Britain's top 10 most improved roads is in the report and accompanies this release as a pdf.*

### **Top 10 persistently higher risk roads**

Britain's most persistent high risk road is the A18 Laceby - Ludborough between the East Midlands and Yorkshire. This section topped a high risk table in a previous version of this report for the highest risk road without motorcycle involvement. The 16km road section is rural and tree-lined, winding and narrow. These characteristics are likely to explain the high concentration of run-off crashes on the route (41%). Fatal and serious crashes increased from 10 to 17 over the two report periods.

*A list of the top 10 persistently higher risk roads in Britain is in the report and accompanies this release as a pdf.*

*The report also notes the highest risk road in each part of the UK.*

### **Around Britain**

How safe a region is depends on how much travel is on safe or on risky infrastructure. Britain's safest region by far is the West Midlands whose motorway and single carriageways are the safest. The fastest improving region is Scotland whose single carriageways roads, on which the country is so reliant, now perform above average.

Single carriageways in the South East are the worst performing and are nearly twice as risky as those in the West Midlands. Single carriageways in the North West also under-perform. Wales and the East Midlands are overall the riskiest places to use the roads.

### **Scotland**

- Scotland is the fastest improving region in Britain, where its single carriageways roads, on which the country is so reliant, now perform above average
- Scotland has Britain's most improved road; the A70 Cumnock - Ayr.
- Risk of death and serious injury on the trunk 'A' roads is highest in Scotland (lowest North East)
- The non-metropolitan authorities which see the lowest crash costs per capita are located in Scotland (and Wales). There are relatively high levels of deprivation in these authorities and car ownership and usage (thus exposure to risk) is lower when economic activity is below average
- Highest-risk road in Scotland is the A909 between Burntisland and Kelty

### **Wales**

- Highest-risk road in Wales is the A44 between Llangurig and Aberystwyth
- The risk of death and serious injury is highest in Wales (30 fatal and serious crashes for every billion vehicle km travelled) (lowest West Midlands (17))
- The non-metropolitan authorities which see the lowest crash costs per capita are located in Wales (and Scotland). There are relatively high levels of deprivation in

these authorities and car ownership and usage (and thus exposure to risk) is lower when economic activity is below average

### **South East**

- Risk on single carriageway 'A' roads is highest in the South East (62) (lowest West Midlands (34))
- Risk on motorways is highest in the South East (8) (lowest West Midlands (5))
- 20% of non-primary 'A' roads are rated lower risk in the South East
- The South East saw an increase in risk of death and serious injury over the two time periods of 1%
- The authorities bearing the higher costs are the larger ones with significant volumes of travel within their boundaries. These are all located in England, particularly in the South East. The economic burden of serious road crashes in Hampshire, Kent, and Essex each exceeds £0.5bn over the three year data period
- The highest risk local authority road in the South East is the A285 between Chichester and Petworth
- The South East also has Highways England's highest risk road: the A21 between Hurst Green and Hastings

### **South West**

- Highest risk road in the South West is the A383 between the A38 and A380 at Kingsteignton

### **West Midlands**

- Risk on single carriageway 'A' roads is lowest in the West Midlands (34) (highest South East (62))
- Risk on motorways is lowest in the West Midlands (5) (highest South East (8))
- Risk of death and serious injury on local authority 'A' roads is lowest in the West Midlands (highest North West)
- Only 11% of non-primary 'A' roads are rated higher risk in the West Midlands
- 62% of non-primary 'A' roads are rated lower risk in the West Midlands
- The West Midlands' highest risk road is the A428 between Coventry and the A5

### **East Midlands**

- The East Midlands (along with Wales) is overall the riskiest places to use the roads
- Highest risk road is the A155 in Lincolnshire between Tattershall and the A16
- Part of Britain's most persistent high risk road is also in the East Midlands: the A18 Laceby – Ludborough between the East Midlands and Yorkshire

### **North West**

- Risk of death and serious injury on local authority 'A' roads is highest in the North West (lowest West Midlands)
- 41% of non-primary 'A' roads are rated higher risk in the North West
- The A588 between Blackpool and Lancaster is the North West's highest risk road
- The North West has Highway England's most improved road: the 11km section of the M6 between junctions 33 and 34
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### **North East**

- Risk of death and serious injury on the trunk 'A' roads is lowest in the North East (highest in Scotland)
- Highest risk road in the North East is the A688 Barnard Castle to the A68.

In his foreword to the report, Road Safety Foundation Chairman, Lord Whitty says: "Travel on single carriageway 'A' roads has become 8 times more risky than on motorways. The most improved roads show just how effective small infrastructure safety improvements can be. But the pace of improvement is far too slow – just 2% of the network shows material reduction in risk.

"On many 'A' roads, the margin for human error is often small. The largest single cause of death is running off the road, where poor roadside protection can see brutal impacts take place. Junctions remain the largest source of serious injury as vehicle side impact protection is at its most limited. We can expect improvements in vehicle collision detection systems at junctions, but the road infrastructure and new vehicle systems need to be developed hand in hand if we want to see a real increase in road safety."

The report is sponsored by Ageas UK, whose Chief Executive, Andy Watson, says: "It is possible to make road safety pay. As this report shows, local authorities can invest small amounts which remove known high risks on the roads – potentially avoiding spending large amounts on expensive local services such as long term care when the brain or spine are injured.

"As Britain's third largest motor insurer, we support our customers daily when they are involved in road crashes. Our employees understand the distress and suffering experienced first-hand. We are committed to supporting the development of new approaches based on evidence and data.

"This latest annual report is rich in data and mapping. I look forward to the debate that the new data will stimulate as major changes to national roads and local authority finance bring new opportunities and challenges to reduce death on the roads."

Ends/more

### **Notes to editors**

The detailed data used to produce these results was commissioned from TRL Limited and included the creation of the British EuroRAP network of road sections, assignment of crashes and traffic data to individual routes and classification of crash types.

An interim report issued in June 2015 featured the A285 as the most persistently high risk road between the periods 2007-2009 and 2010-2012. This current report covers the periods 2008-2010 and 2011-2013, the number of crashes on the A285 fell slightly between 2008-2010, falling below the threshold of other road sections in the current table. The route remains the highest risk in the South East region.

The full report is temporarily available at <http://roadsafetyfoundation.org/british-eurorap-results-2015-embargoed-content.aspx> and will be on the Road Safety Foundation website [www.roadsafetyfoundation.org](http://www.roadsafetyfoundation.org) on Tuesday 15 September.

**Pdf attachments show:**

Top 10 most improved roads across the UK  
Top 10 persistently higher risk roads across the UK  
Most improved road on the English Strategic Road Network  
Persistently higher risk road on the English Strategic Road Network  
Highest risk road by region/nation  
Economic loss by non-metropolitan road authority

For the first time since this report was published, the A537 between Macclesfield and Buxton ("The Cat and Fiddle Pass") has not appeared in the list of persistently higher risk roads. This road section has become among the most improved after seeing a significant reduction in the number of serious crashes from 31 to 7 (between 2008-10 and 2011-13) – although the small volume of traffic means that it remains higher risk to individual road users. Significant safety measures have been put in place on the section since 2008 following a collision investigation study. A motorcycle-friendly barrier was built in 2008 on a bend with a high concentration of crashes involving motorcyclists. In addition, the Cheshire Safer Road Partnership and Cheshire East Council (formally Cheshire County Council) submitted a successful proposal to access DfT funds to make the A537 a safer environment for all road users. Average speed cameras were introduced along the route and activated in 2010.

For embargoed interviews please contact the numbers below.

**Media contacts**

**Road Safety Foundation**

To arrange interviews, for regional data and other detailed media enquiry, please contact: Caroline Moore on 01256 345598 or 07787 228166

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