

Road Safety in Wandsworth Public Health Review



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Note that the findings in this brief have been summarised from a more detailed technical report, a copy of which can be obtained by contacting Wandsworth Public Health.

Summary

Road traffic collisions and casualties are a major cause of preventable death, serious physical injury, and psychological trauma. Being involved in a collision can have lasting effects, directly reducing quality of life in both the short and long term. Road safety is a public health issue because casualties and injuries affect not only the health and wellbeing of individuals but also families and communities. Furthermore, there are systematic inequalities in how this burden is distributed across different populations.

Public Health reviewed STATS19 collision and casualty data (2017–2024) from the Department for Transport, accessed via Transport for London’s Road Safety Dashboard, to clarify Wandsworth’s rating within the Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF), particularly for those killed or seriously injured (KSI).¹ PHOF is a collection of indicators used in England to monitor public health trends, benchmark local authority performance, and reduce health inequalities.²

The latest dataset (2024) shows Wandsworth rated ‘red’, with 163 casualties, or 356 per 1 billion vehicle miles travelled—significantly higher than England’s crude rate (89.8) and the London average (184.1). However, PHOF provides only a crude comparison, as local variations in road networks, built environments, and population density—including large numbers of visitors and commuters—make direct comparisons challenging.

While overall casualties have declined by 22% since 2017, vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motorcyclists, and pedestrians remain disproportionately affected. Casualties also continue to be concentrated on TfL-managed roads and at high-traffic junctions, with deprivation strongly associated with greater risk for people living near busy routes. Most roads in the borough are now covered by 20-mph speed limits, including all Council-managed roads. The rollout of 20-mph limits has reduced casualties on previously faster roads but has also resulted in a greater proportion of casualties occurring on 20-mph roads—reflecting network-wide changes rather than increased risk on those streets.

Achieving the Vision Zero target of eliminating deaths and serious injuries by 2041 remains a significant challenge for Wandsworth, requiring accelerated and sustained action. This report highlights key priorities, including the continued need for road-design measures that support speed compliance, infrastructure improvements for cyclists and pedestrians, targeted awareness campaigns for high-risk groups (such as males aged 16–59 and older pedestrians), and ongoing engagement with deprived communities living near major roads. The Council’s initiatives—such as School Streets, enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure, junction improvements, and increased investment in road maintenance to address poor surface conditions—are all positive steps. However, achieving Vision Zero 2030 and 2041 safety goals will require continued focus and long-term funding.³

¹ 2017 to 2024 is the available dataset from TfL

² PHOF is managed by the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID)

³ Note that Wandsworth Council has a statutory obligation for road safety under the Road Traffic Acts (1988, 1984, 1991), the Traffic Management Act 2004, the Highways Act 1980, and the Equality Act 2010 to reduce collisions, promote safe movement, and ensure accessibility for all.

Behaviour-change campaigns and targeted awareness-raising should include greater publicity around the changes to the 'hierarchy of road users' introduced in the Highway Code, including pedestrian priority at junctions and priority for cyclists when vehicles are turning. The majority of motorists in Britain remain unaware of these key changes, which have reshaped the dynamics of shared road use since 2022.

A significant portion of collisions involved cars and goods vehicles within the borough, often with vulnerable road users including pedal cyclists, motorcyclists, and pedestrians. A linked contributing factor has been ineffective observation among those involved, including drivers, as well as travelling at speeds unsuitable for road conditions. As a result, targeted and well-designed campaigns (including feedback mechanisms) should be implemented, but these must be supported by enforcement and complementary measures.^{4 5}

Looking ahead, new vehicle technologies could offer opportunities to significantly improve road safety, including the potential to reduce human error. While autonomous vehicles (AVs) remain several years away from widespread deployment on public roads, and although they excel at routine tasks (such as lane-following, maintaining distance, and navigating familiar routes), they continue to struggle with complex, unpredictable, human-heavy environments. It is nonetheless important for the Council to consider how road-infrastructure design could support future driver-assistance technologies and the increasing presence of autonomous vehicles.

⁴ The Fiona Fylan report produced 2017 is often referred to in road safety reviews in context of behaviour change interventions guidance which practitioners find useful and easy to read. Link: https://www.racfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Using_behaviour_change_techniques_Guidance_for_the_road_safety_community.pdf

⁵ Note that there are debates related to how effective educational interventions campaigns over the long-term, most studies well designed interventions can produce short-term improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and willingness to change behaviour. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1369847824001888>

1. Casualty Trends

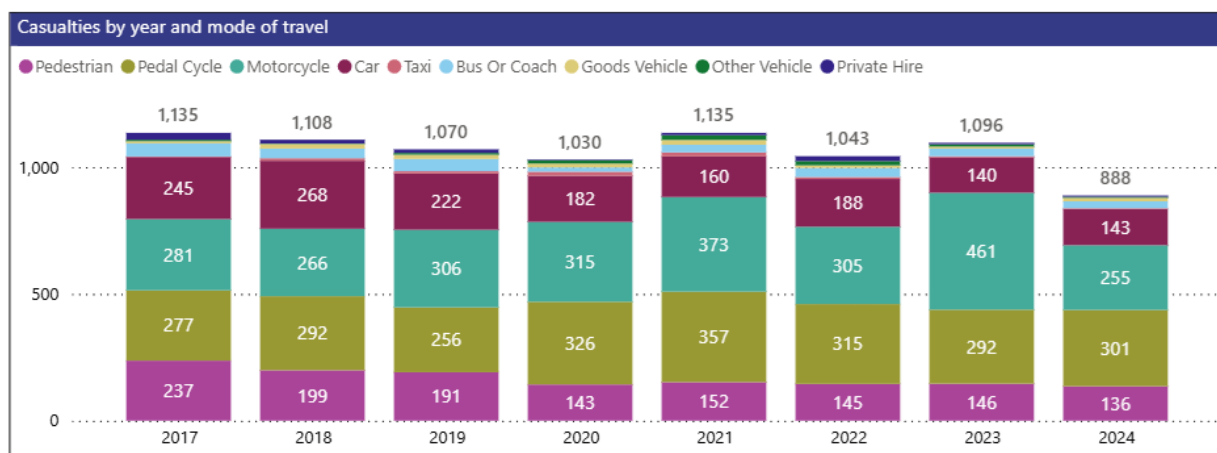
National and London

Road casualties have been declining across both the UK and London over the past decade. From 2017 to 2024: ^{6 7}

- UK- 25% reduction in casualties (from 170,993 to 128,272).
- London - 26% reduction (from 32,567 to 24,019).

Borough

Figure 1. Casualty Trend Overall, Wandsworth, 2017 to 2024. Source TfL



Reviewed data (Figure 1) shows that:

- Total casualties have fallen from 1,135 in 2017 to 888 in 2024 (a decrease of 22%) for Wandsworth as a whole, this is an encouraging trend.
- Between 2017 and 2024, there were 8,505 road casualties within Wandsworth, included 32 fatalities and 1,281 serious injuries; these two categories are often referred to as KSIs (killed or seriously injured) and exclude people who might have been slightly injured.

The majority of collisions in Wandsworth involved cars, particularly in incidents with pedal cycles, followed by motorcycles, other cars, and pedestrians. Goods vehicles were next, often involved in collisions with pedal cycles and motorcycles (Figure 2).

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2024/reported-road-casualties-great-britain-annual-report-2024>

⁷ <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/casualties-in-greater-london-2024.pdf>

Figure 2. Vehicles Involved in Collisions, Wandsworth, 2017 to 2024. Source TfL

Casualty Mode of Travel	Pedal Cycle	Motorcycle	Car	Taxi	Private Hire	Bus Or Coach	Goods Vehicle	Other Vehicle
Pedestrian	93	289	713	21	49	80	127	23
Pedal Cycle	59	145	1624	66	59	55	313	29
Motorcycle	40	126	1861	37	67	32	260	24
Car	7	77	1073	21	47	54	188	36
Taxi	3	1	42	6	1	2	4	
Bus Or Coach	4	4	52		3	11	8	1
Goods Vehicle	1	5	62	2	3	2	21	2
Other Vehicle	2	4	50		3	1	14	2
Private Hire	1	2	58	3	10	8	12	

While car-related casualties (drivers/occupants) have decreased over the years (Figure 3), from 245 in 2017 to 143 in 2024, this decrease is mainly related to slight injuries.

In terms of KSIs, it is a more mixed picture (Figure 4). For other modes, such as buses/coaches or goods vehicles, there has also been a similar decrease. For buses/coaches (drivers or passengers), overall casualties (mostly serious and slight injuries) decreased from 52 in 2017 to 27 in 2024; however, KSIs (no fatalities were recorded) went from 4 in 2017 to 8 in 2024, with a peak of 14 in 2022.

For goods vehicles, driver/passenger casualties increased from 8 to in 2017 to 14 in 2024, with peaks of 15 to 19 from 2018 to 2021. While there were no fatalities for goods vehicles from 2017 to 2024, goods vehicles were the second largest contributor to collisions with cars and pedal cyclists in the borough.

The vast majority of casualties in the borough involved pedal cyclists, motorcyclists and cars, KSI rates have not substantially changed over the years.

Figure 3. Car Related Casualties – Fatal, Serious and Slight, Wandsworth, 2017 to 2024. Source TfL

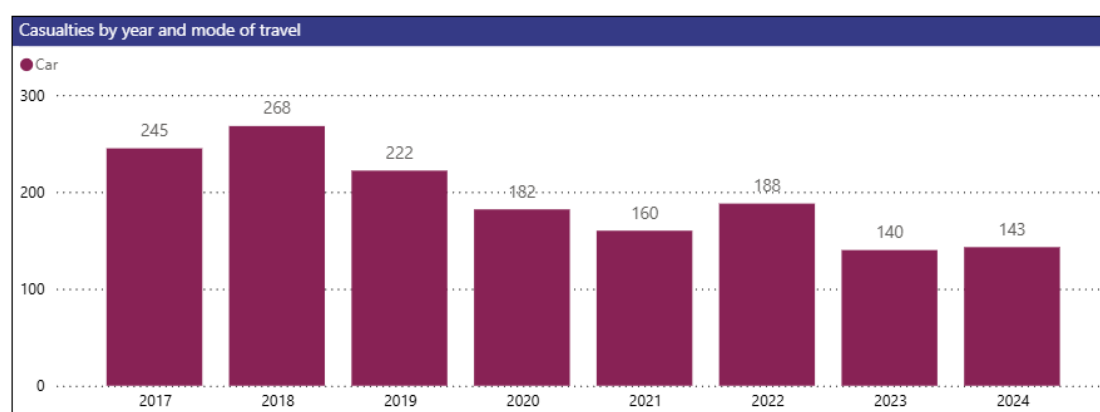


Figure 4. Car Related Casualties - Fatal and Serious (KSI), Wandsworth, 2017 to 2024. Source TfL

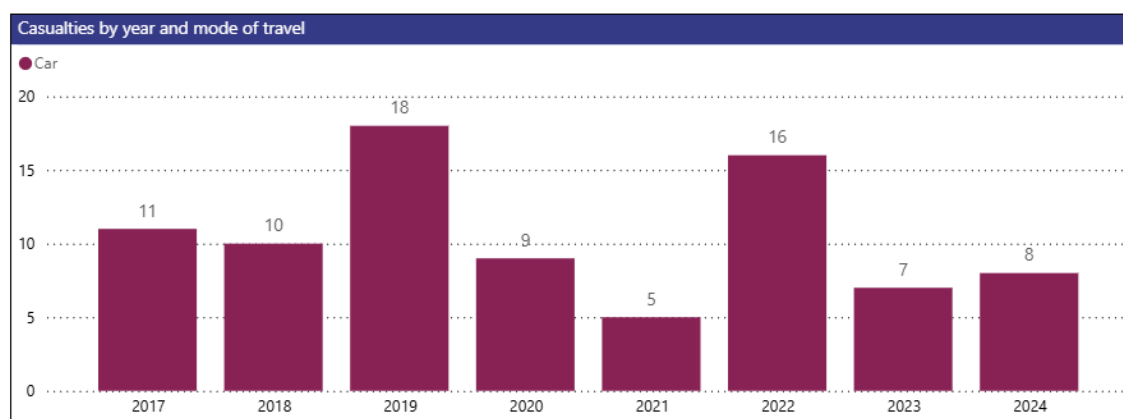
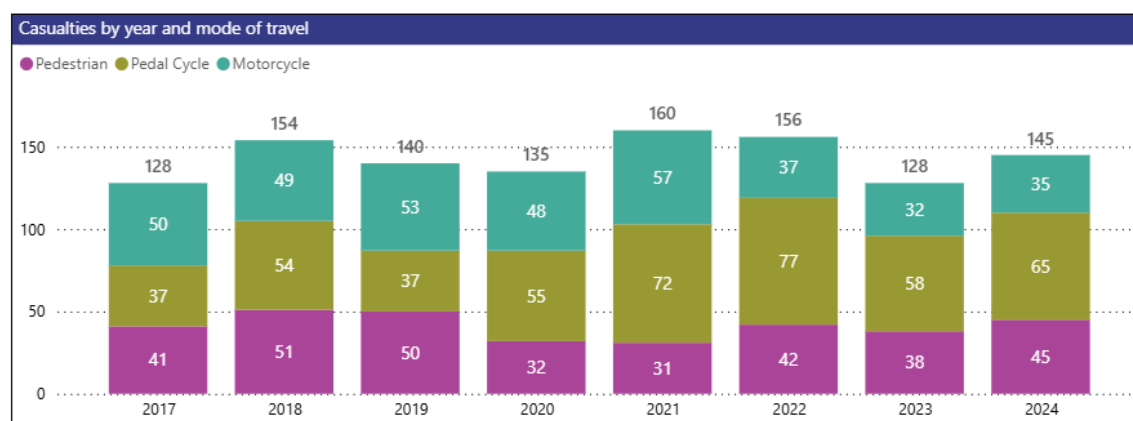


Figure 5. Pedestrian, Pedal Cycle and Motorcycle Casualties - Fatal and Serious (KSI), Wandsworth, 2017 to 2024. Source TfL



2. Roads in the Borough

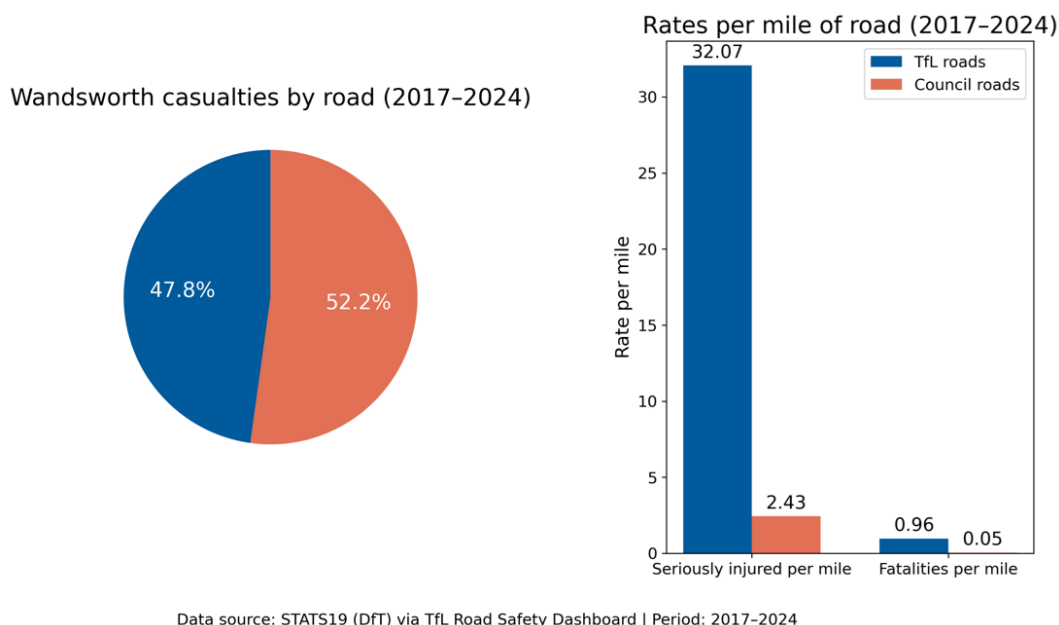
The Council is not responsible for managing all roads within the borough. Roads carrying the highest traffic volumes fall under the remit of Transport for London (TfL).

Of the 8,505 casualties:

- 4,065 (48%) were on TfL's roads, including 667 seriously injured and 20 fatalities.
- 4,440 (52%) were on Council managed roads, including 614 seriously injured and 12 fatalities.

There is approximately 273.4 miles of roads in Wandsworth, of this 20.8 miles are managed by TfL (7%) while 252.6 miles are managed by Wandsworth Council (93%). Roads managed by TfL account for a significant proportion of KSI's (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Road Responsibilities and KSI



Looking at the data from 2017 to 2024, it is important to acknowledge that Wandsworth is at the lower end of casualty counts overall among Inner London boroughs for this period, 9th overall behind the likes of Westminster, Lambeth and Tower Hamlets. When TfL casualties are removed, comparisons of borough roads casualties across London show that Wandsworth is near the lower half in terms of casualties – 19th place out of 33 local authorities in London.

3. Road Speed

The borough-wide 20 miles per hour (mph) speed limit was implemented, starting from 2017 and subsequently expanded to cover all council-managed roads, including busy A and B roads. As more borough roads transitioned from 30 or 40 miles per hour (mph) road speed limits to a default 20 mph limit from 2017 onward, casualty patterns shifted.

- **Casualties on 20 mph designated roads:** increased from 202 in 2017 to 687 in 2024 — a 240% rise.
- **Casualties on 30 mph and 40 mph roads:** decreased from 963 in 2017 to 189 in 2024 — an 80% reduction.

- The Council's own traffic surveys confirms that the mean speed across the borough is less than 24 mph, which is consistent with a 20-mph posted limit for the borough.

The increase in casualties on 20 mph roads suggests a displacement effect, where casualties have become more concentrated on 20 mph roads as the network of 20 mph routes expanded to cover most of the borough.

4. Geography

Fatal and Serious Injuries

- Data from 2017 to 2024 showed concentration on the borough's busiest roads and major junctions, with several recurring hotspots—especially in the north.
- Five key locations account for repeated fatal incidents, mostly involving pedestrians on high-traffic corridors such as Clapham Junction/York Road, Wandsworth High Street/East Hill, and Queenstown Road.
- Serious injuries are more widely spread but occur predominantly on TfL-managed roads, where traffic volumes and junction complexity are highest. Patterns differ by road user group, but overall, the spatial distribution reflects the strong influence of traffic density, road hierarchy, and major junction layouts across the borough's strategic road network.

Deprivation

- Casualty rates in the most deprived southern neighbourhoods (e.g., Upper Tooting Road) reach 12.9 per 1,000 residents – among the highest in London. Majority of these locations are near TfL strategic roads.

5. Risk Groups, Demographics and Behaviour

Road Vulnerability

A vulnerable road user is anyone on the road without the physical protection of a motor vehicle, putting them at higher risk of severe injury in a crash, this includes pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, e-scooter users, the elderly, and disabled individual.⁸ Vulnerable users

⁸ "A Vulnerable Road User (VRU) definition by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

of roads continue to suffer disproportionately in context of collision and casualties in Wandsworth.

Casualty and Travel Modes

Casualty rates vary significantly across different modes of travel. In Wandsworth over 2017 to 2024, there have been increases and decreases of certain modes.

Increase

- Motorcyclists (30% of all casualties from 2017 to 2024) increased from 25% (281) of all casualties in 2017 to 29% (255) in 2024.
- Pedal cyclists (28% of all casualties from 2017 to 2024) increased from 24% (277) to 34% (301) in 2024. This is likely to be the result of increased cycling in the borough and across London. The number of daily cycling journeys in London has increased by 43% since 2019, reaching an estimated 1.5 million trips per day in 2025 according to TfL.⁹

Decrease

- Pedestrians (16% of all casualties from 2017 to 2024) decreased from 21% (237) to 15% (136) in 2024

Demographics

Those killed or seriously injured (total: 1,313 from 2017 to 2024) were concentrated in the 25–59 age group (866 or 66%) of which majority were male (69%) as well as 60 plus age group (154 or 12%), with older pedestrians particularly at risk due to age and associated physical and mental conditions. Children aged between 0 to 15 accounted for 49 cases or 4% with one fatality. Youths aged between 16 to 24 accounted for 229 cases or 17%.

Role of Behaviour

From police reports, of total collisions in the borough (7718) the majority of collisions (3020 or 39%) in Wandsworth were caused by a lack of or ineffective observation by drivers, motorcyclists, pedal cyclists and pedestrians.

⁹ <https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2025/november/new-tfl-data-shows-the-number-of-daily-cycling-journeys-in-london-has-risen-by-43-per-cent-since-2019>

6. Road Conditions

Road Maintenance

Well-maintained roads are vital for road safety and active travel including walking and cycling. However, funding shortfalls and consistent data have led to deteriorating and a growing maintenance backlog nationwide including in London. Wandsworth's Highways Maintenance Report (March 2025) highlighted the Council's statutory duty under Section 41 of the Highways Act 1980 to keep roads safe.

In Wandsworth, the council manages 93% of roads and faces budget gaps, relying on reactive repairs. Despite reduced national and regional funding, the council has increased investment, raising capital for road improvements from £4.75 million to £8 million in 2024/25 and planning £10.25 million annually going forward to stabilise and gradually improve conditions.¹⁰ In addition to its own funding, the Council has also secured a grant allocation of £655,000 for the DfT for 2025/26 financial year. For 2026/27 the baseline funding for the borough will be £827,000 with up to £513,000 available through incentive funding.

7. Vision Zero

Targets

The Mayor of London's Transport Strategy highlights what is known as Vision Zero, a target to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from the city's transport network by 2041 with baseline from 2010-2014 average figure. The Council currently does not have a specific adopted road safety plan compared to some of the neighbouring boroughs. However, road safety targets are embedded in the Council's (statutory) Local Implementation Plan (LIP) often referred to as the borough transport strategy.¹¹

Progress

Progress on Vision Zero is steady but challenging for the 2030 interim target for London. The London region missed its 2022 Vision Zero interim target, achieving a 38% reduction in KSI compared with the required 65%. Wandsworth was also off track; the borough would have needed KSI to fall to around 81 in 2022, declining further to 59 by 2030. Actual KSI figures however, were 195 in 2022.

Key elements in the LIP (produced in 2019) to address KSI's included lowering speed limits, improving infrastructure for walking and cycling, reducing traffic volumes, targeting high-risk

¹⁰ Note that this does not include TfL roads under the remit of the Mayor of London

¹¹ https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/4979/wandsworth_council_third_local_implementation_plan.pdf

locations, promoting behaviour change via education and enforcement as well as supporting active travel and accessibility.

Vision Zero objectives are embedded in the LIP, but consistent with all boroughs, these will be extremely challenging to achieve, this includes limiting KSI to 59 or less in 2030 and have zero KSI by 2041.¹² Some of the challenges stem from the immense complexity of the road network, and the need to balance high-volume motor traffic with the rapid growth of active across London, including in Wandsworth.

8. Priorities

Achieving Vision Zero's ambition of eliminating deaths and serious injuries by 2041 will require, targeted interventions and investment. Wandsworth has laid solid foundations in recent years, this includes embedding of the 20 miles per hour (mph) speed limit across the entire borough, number of infrastructure improvements including junction, walking and cycling route improvements as well as implementation of the School Streets programme. Going forwards, it is important that the Council utilises momentum and drives progress on the following:

1. Build on the work that is already underway	• Delivery of infrastructure and urban realm improvements to support road safety for all; including targeted interventions delivered in high-risk areas to help achieve Vision Zero's ambitions in the borough. This includes building on proposals which have underpinned the LIP, the Wandsworth Walking and Cycling Strategy as well as various public realm improvements in recent years.
2. Build on the 20-mph borough status	• Balancing the benefits of being a 20 miles per hour (mph) borough with vigilance and need to remind people of continued risk of injuries and fatalities. These can still occur in 20 mph zones because no road safety measure can eliminate all risk. • Continue to link the concept of healthy streets and healthy neighbourhoods by communicating the benefits of being a 20-

¹² https://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/media/4979/wandsworth_council_third_local_implementation_plan.pdf

	mph borough including for walking and cycling. • Support active travel by building on the borough Active Travel Strategy and advancement of 15-minute neighbourhoods so people understand how the Council is building the blocks for a healthy and safe borough. • Speed management, reinforced by street design. Speed limits are most effective when reinforced by street design, as the physical characteristics of a street strongly influence driver behaviour according to studies. • Proposed road improvements in areas with high levels of elderly and those with disabilities should automatically consider disability and dementia friendly design with input from disability groups. • Consider how road infrastructure design could support future driver-assistance technologies and the increasing use of autonomous vehicles.
3. Targets communications and awareness raising	• To communicate with residents more holistically using language and materials that is accessible for all under a road danger reduction approach including engagement of at-risk road users and communities. • Awareness raising is needed in terms of road behaviour and risk, for drivers, cyclists, motorcyclists, especially in context of males aged 25 to 59 years of age within the borough. • Targeted awareness raising, for pedestrians aged 60 plus especially in context of busy roads and junctions as well as at bus stops. Elderly pedestrians face higher risks due to age-related declines in vision, hearing, and mobility, making them more vulnerable when using the roads.

	• Engage deprived communities in the borough near busy roads in relation to tackling the inequalities of road danger, people in such areas are likely to be at much higher risk of being injured. • Highlight and communicate changes to the Highway Code, including updates to the Hierarchy of Road Users that strengthen priority for pedestrians and cyclists.
4. Collaboration	• Need for continued collaboration with TfL, Police and neighbouring boroughs. Although TfL have their own road safety plan across their network in the capital, it is important that there is joint effort to address priorities. The issue of speeding is still prevalent, enforcement action sits with the Police, so it is critical that there are joint efforts to address issues, including resourcing.

9. New National Road Safety Strategy

Since the completion of the Road Safety Review for Wandsworth by Public Health, the Department for Transport launched the first national Road Safety Strategy in 15 years in January 2026. It sets targets to reduce deaths and serious injuries (KSIs) by 65% by 2035, and by 70% for children under 16, based on the 2022–2024 baseline.

The strategy adopts a Vision Zero (Safe Systems) approach, focusing on prevention through safer road design, improved technology, stronger enforcement, and better protection for vulnerable road users. Key reforms include mandatory eyesight tests for older drivers, lower drink-drive limits, and enhanced training for new drivers.

The strategy prioritises safer infrastructure, improved use of collision and hospital data, safer vehicles—including the use of advanced driver assistance systems—and strengthened enforcement in relation to speeding. A new Road Safety Board will oversee delivery, with plans to establish a Road Safety Investigation Branch to support learning from incidents. It also highlights the need for updated national guidance on the development and delivery of road safety education, training, and publicity, as well as the continued need to encourage safer road user behaviours via THINK!, the UK Government's designated road safety campaign established in 2000.

With £24 billion allocated for road maintenance and improvements between 2026 and 2030, infrastructure investment forms a key pillar of the strategy. Updated guidance on setting speed limits and revisions to the Manual for Streets will help local authorities design roads that prioritise vulnerable users such as pedestrians and cyclists. The impact of these changes on Wandsworth should be assessed in future years.

Additional Background Information Section

1. Purpose and Scope of the Review Brief

This brief has been developed to provide an overview of road safety in Wandsworth by synthesising the evidence, trends, and implications. The review adopts a public health perspective, recognising road safety as a major determinant of physical, mental, and social wellbeing.

Scope of analysis

- ✓ Analysis of STATS19 collision and casualty data (2017–2024)
- ✓ Examination of fatalities and serious injuries (KSI)
- ✓ Contextual comparison with London-wide and national trends
- ✓ Consideration of road network characteristics, traffic volume, and speed limits
- ✓ Exploration of demographic, geographic, and deprivation-related risk factors

This brief explicitly acknowledges limitations in collision data, particularly under-reporting of slight injuries and the lack of detailed demographic indicators such as disability status or ethnicity.

2. Road Safety as a Public Health Issue

Road traffic collisions are a significant and preventable cause of death, serious injury, and long-term trauma. Their impacts extend beyond immediate physical harm, often resulting in chronic health conditions, disability, psychological distress, reduced mobility, and social exclusion. From a public health standpoint, road safety directly influences life expectancy, healthy life years, and inequalities between communities.

Road safety within the modern public health framework, has moved beyond individual behaviour to consider systemic risk factors. It builds on the traditional approach adopted by transport and highway engineers with regards to the traditional 3 E's, historically, road safety relied on:

- Engineering (safer infrastructure and vehicles)
- Education (driver training and public campaigns), and
- Enforcement (policing road rules).

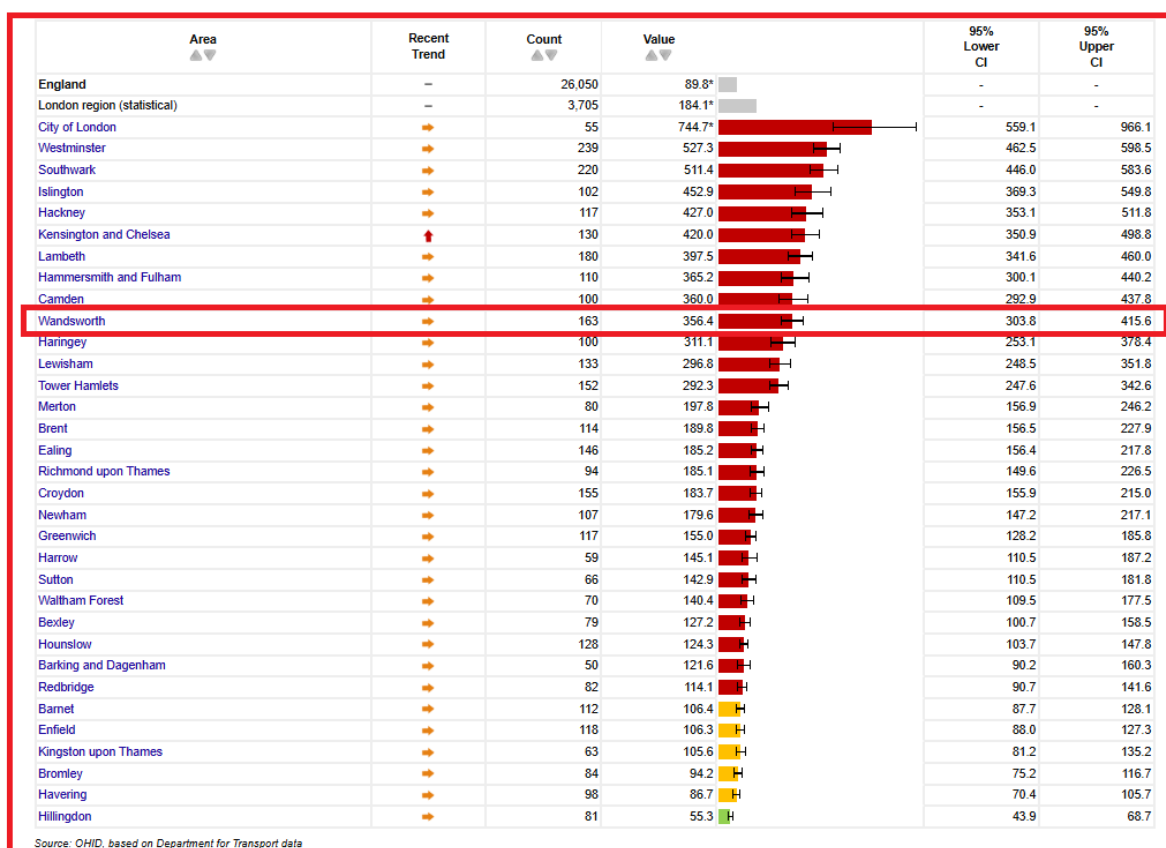
While the 3 E's are still relevant, the Safe System approach has become more prominent in terms of both transport and public health approaches. The approach recognises that human error is inevitable and that the transport system must be designed to prevent such errors from resulting in death or serious injury. Key components of the Safe System include:

- ✓ Safe Road design and infrastructure
- ✓ Safe speeds
- ✓ Safe vehicles
- ✓ Safe Road user behaviour
- ✓ Effective post-collision response

Vision Zero, embedded within the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy, encompasses the Safe System approach. It aims to eliminate all road deaths and serious injuries in London by 2041, with interim reduction targets set for 2022 and 2030.

The Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF) provides a national mechanism for benchmarking local public health outcomes. Indicator B10 (killed or seriously injured casualties per billion vehicle miles) places Wandsworth in a 'red' category (Figure 7). The count was 163, or 356.4 per 1 billion vehicle miles travelled - higher than England's crude rate of 89.8 and the London average of 184.1. KSI was based on 2024 casualty data. It is important to note however that this indicator offers only a crude comparison. It does not adequately reflect differences in road network composition, commuter through traffic, layout of the network or management especially between boroughs and TfL.

Figure 7. Public Health Outcomes Framework (PHOF): B10 – Killed and seriously injured casualties on England's roads. Crude rate – per billion vehicle miles



3. Road Network and Traffic Context

Wandsworth is a densely populated Inner London borough (13.23 square miles with 330,000 residents) with a complex, high-density road network comprising A-roads, Red Routes, and local streets (Figure 8). It experiences persistent congestion due to heavy commuter flows, historical Victorian layouts, and ongoing roadworks.

The borough contains approximately 273 miles of roads, including 20 plus miles managed by TfL under Red Route controls these include some of the busiest roads in the borough including the A205 (South Circular Road), A3/A3205, and A24. Five Thames bridges (Wandsworth, Putney, Battersea, Albert, Chelsea) provide key cross-river links. The volume of annual traffic in Wandsworth has decreased substantially since 1994 (Figure 9), 457 million vehicle miles travelled in Wandsworth for 2024 according to DfT data, in 2010 it was 521 million miles. Traffic and congestion hotspots include Putney High Street, Lower Richmond Road, Armoury Way, Battersea/Queenstown Road, York Road, Battersea Bridge Road, A24 Balham-Tooting, and Trinity Road.

In Wandsworth, the busiest cycling routes are primarily major commuter corridors that connect south-west London to the city centre. These routes often see thousands of daily journeys, particularly during peak morning and evening hours Key routes include Cycleway 7 (estimated to 3,000 cycle journeys per day, running through Tooting and Balham towards central London, Queenstown Road and Cycleway 8 connecting Wandsworth (along western boundary of Nine Elms via Chelsea Bridge Road) to Westminster.

Figure 8. Road Network Wandsworth

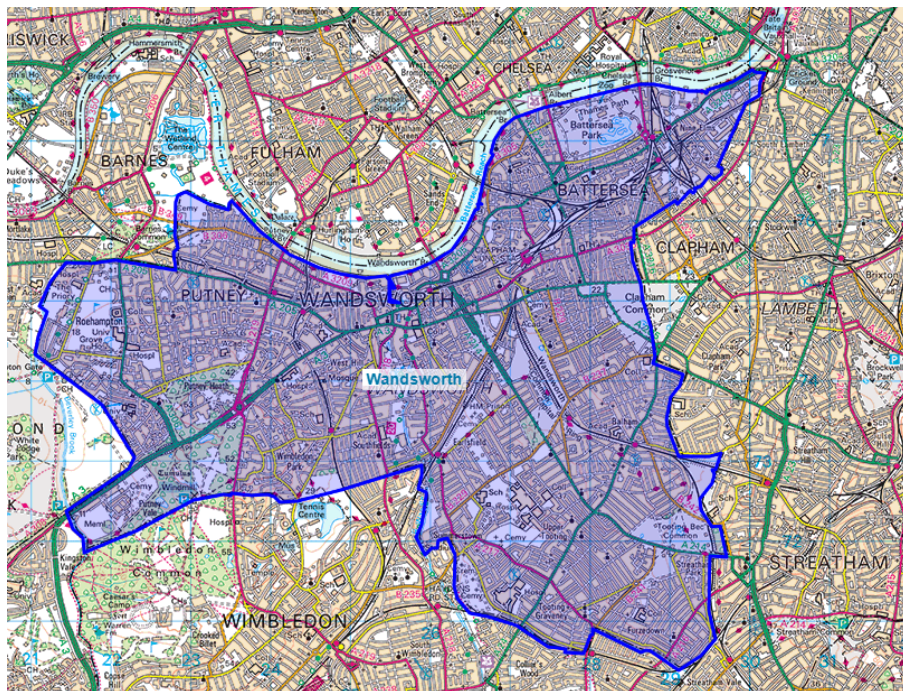
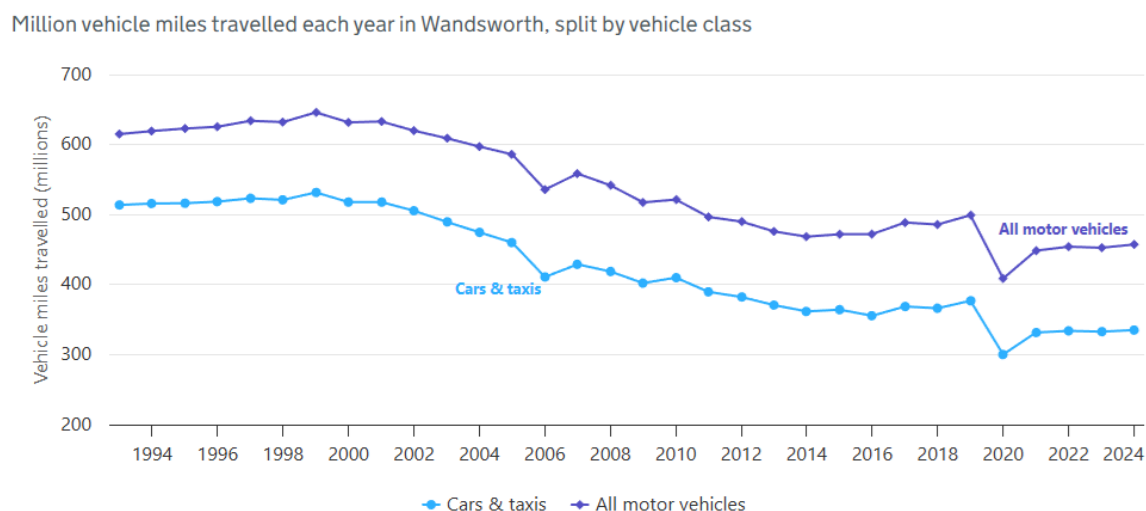


Figure 9. Annual traffic by vehicle class (1993 to 2024) vehicle miles in Wandsworth



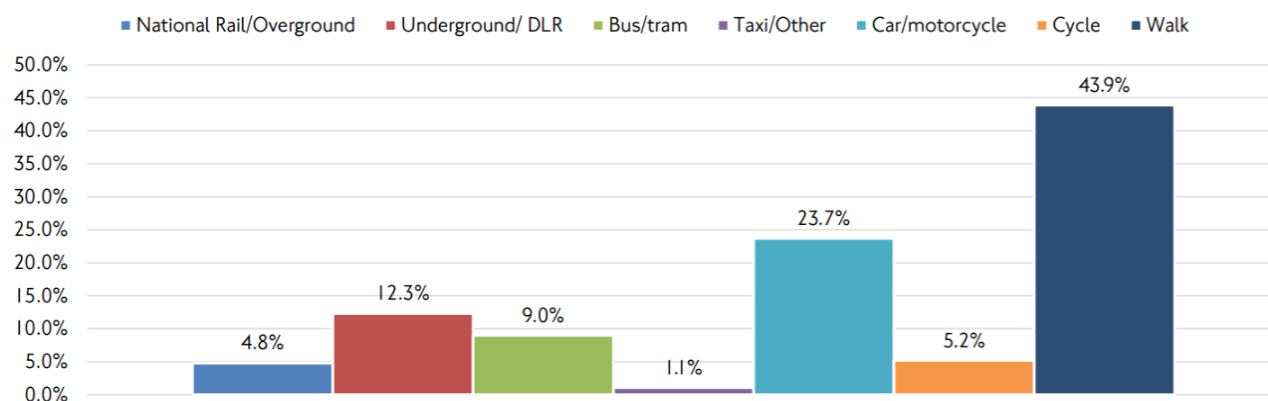
Transport Policies and Initiatives:

- Wandsworth borough has reduced the speed limit on most roads to 20 mph to improve safety. 20 mph speed limits were introduced on residential roads in 2017; expanded to all classified roads by 2022; TfL extended limits to major A/B roads in 2023.
- Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) Coverage: Entire borough included since August 2023.

Travel Patterns:

- Walking is the predominant mode of travel in Wandsworth (Figure 10), followed by cars/motorcycles; public transport (trains, buses) ranks lower (TfL, London Travel Demand Survey data).

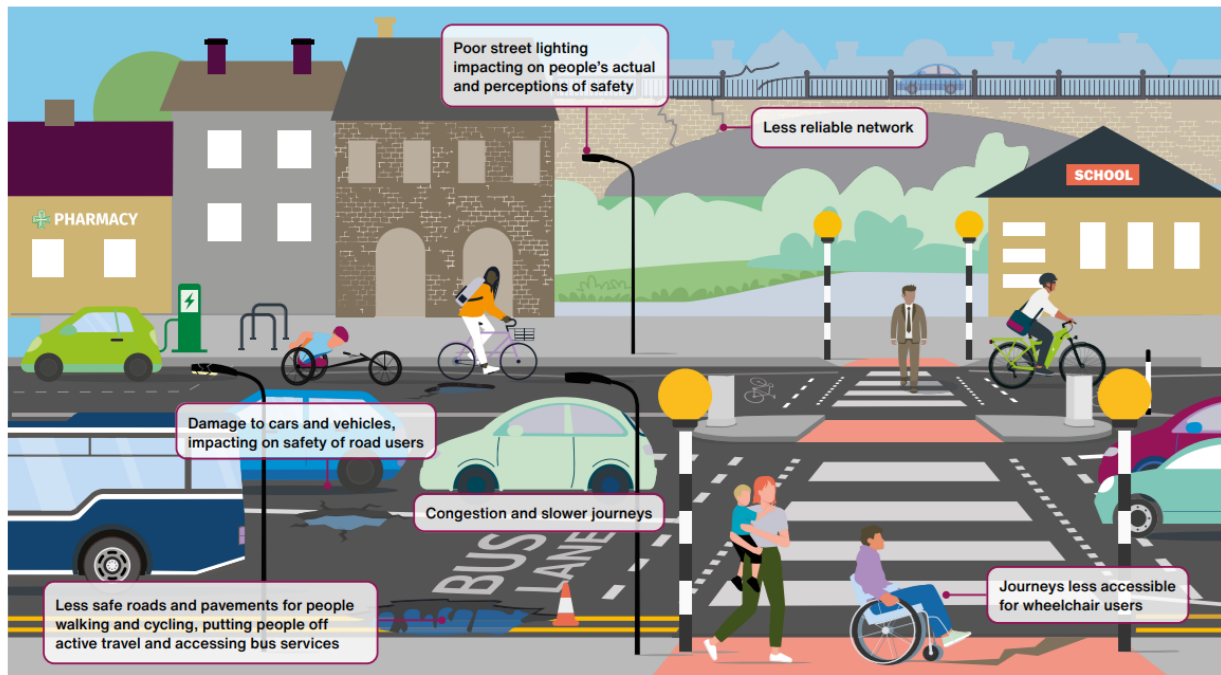
Figure 10. Wandsworth: % trips per day mode share by borough of residence (2022/23)



Road Condition and Maintenance

The condition of roads affects the likelihood of collisions, though this varies considerably across London. Figure 11 below illustrates some of the impacts of poorly maintained roads on people and communities.

Figure 11. Illustrative impacts of poorly maintained local road. Source: NAO and DfT



The Department for Transport (DfT) states that poorly maintained local roads and associated infrastructure can endanger users, lead to congestion and longer journeys, and discourage active travel such as cycling or walking. Well-maintained local roads are considered vital for both the economy and the social well-being of communities.

Road condition varies across London, with Wandsworth showing a mixed picture on A-roads, with limited data availability for B and C roads. Nationally, underinvestment in local road maintenance has resulted in a growing backlog, with implications for safety, reliability, and active travel uptake. Set against the challenges above, in Wandsworth there are positive recent developments. The Council increased capital investment in roads improvement and maintenance from £4.75 million to £8 million in 2024/25 and to £10.25 million per annum going forwards, with planned funding levels expected to stabilise and gradually improve network and road conditions over time. In addition to its own funding, the Council has also secured a grant allocation of £655,000 for the DfT for 2025/26 financial year. For 2026/27 the baseline funding for the borough will be £827,000 with up to £513,000 available through incentive funding.

4. Risk Factors and Vulnerability

Road traffic casualties are influenced by a complex interaction of factors related to the driver's or pedestrian's behaviour and physical condition, vehicle characteristics, road and weather conditions as well as road design according to the likes of DfT. This section focuses on three elements in terms of vulnerability, firstly those are the most vulnerable on the roads, second demographics, third role of speed and the first behaviour.

Vulnerability

Those that are most vulnerable are road users are those who have less protection than vehicles which have crash protection, these include pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists.

- The Highway Code (2022) introduced a hierarchy of road users, placing greatest responsibility on those operating vehicles that can cause most harm.
- In 2024, 81% of KSIs in England involved walking, cycling, or motorcycling.
- Under-reporting is common, especially for cyclists and slight injuries.

Age, Deprivation, Ethnicity and Disability

Systemic road safety inequalities based on age and deprivation highlight higher casualty rates, in context of disability there is a lack of data to determine level of risk

- Older adults (aged 60 plus) are more vulnerable due to declines in vision, hearing, and decision-making.¹³
- Deprivation and ethnicity strongly correlate with casualty risk:
 - Most deprived areas in London have double KSI rates vs least deprived (London, TfL data).
 - Ethnic minorities are 25% more likely to be pedestrian casualties in London (London, TfL data).
- Ethnic minority pedestrians in poor communities for instance are 25% more likely to be casualties than white pedestrians.¹⁴ This is likely linked to higher walking rates and lower car ownership among deprived and minority groups.

Lack of disability data in STATS19 limits detailed analysis and research, however some limited data suggest that disabled pedestrians face five times higher injury risk than non-disabled (from DfT based on National Travel Survey data). People with disabilities can face barriers such as shared spaces and gates that can restrict safe travel. It is important to note that the Equality Act 2010 requires reasonable adjustments for accessibility. Data from the National Travel Survey suggest that disabled people travel less and rely more on buses/taxis with walking and cycling often less viable alternative.

Speed and Road Safety

Higher vehicle speeds significantly increase the risk of death or life-changing injuries for pedestrians and cyclists in particular. A person struck by a vehicle at 30 mph is approximately five times more likely to be killed than if hit at 20 mph.¹⁵

- Inappropriate speed for road conditions is a major contributor to collisions and severity.

¹³ Road design measures may include longer signal timings, clear signage, age-friendly layouts.

¹⁴ <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/policy-reports-and-research/walking-and-inequality/>

¹⁵ The data originates from the UK Department of Transport and related studies, including those cited in a 1998 British Medical Journal editorial on reducing urban speed limits to 20 mph to cut child pedestrian deaths and injuries

- The United Nations (UN) and the UK's Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) recommend 20 mph limits in urban areas with high pedestrian/cyclist activity.

Behaviour

According to the DfT, in the UK, human behaviour is a primary cause of road casualties, with speed, distraction (mobile phones), impairment (alcohol/drugs), and inexperience being major factors, especially for young drivers, leading to thousands of serious injuries and fatalities annually, despite overall casualty numbers fluctuating slightly. Data from 2024 showed behaviour/inexperience as a factor in over half (52%) of fatal collisions, alongside speed (59%) as the biggest single factor.¹⁶

5. Trends and Casualty Data

National

UK road casualty rates have been in long-term decline since the mid-1960s, a trend that continued into 2024 and 2025 despite increasing traffic volume. For the year ending June 2025, fatalities fell by approximately 3% compared to the previous year. This long-term decline is due to a number of reasons, mainly vehicle safety, better road infrastructure, legislation (e.g. seat belt laws), behaviour change (drink driving deterrents) as well as speed enforcement.

London Context

Road casualties have fallen over the past decade, but serious injuries remain stubbornly high, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists.

- In 2024, London recorded 20,989 collisions, resulting in 110 fatalities, 3,597 serious injuries, and 20,312 slight injuries.
- Fatalities rose 16% from 2023 but remain 19% below the 2010–14 baseline.
- Overall injuries decreased 8% year-on-year.

Vision Zero

Vision Zero is London's long-term strategy (under the Mayor of London's Transport Strategy for the region) to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries on the transport network by 2041 based on 2010–2014 average figures. It is built around five pillars: creating safer streets, reducing speeds, improving vehicle safety, encouraging safer behaviours, and strengthening post-collision response.

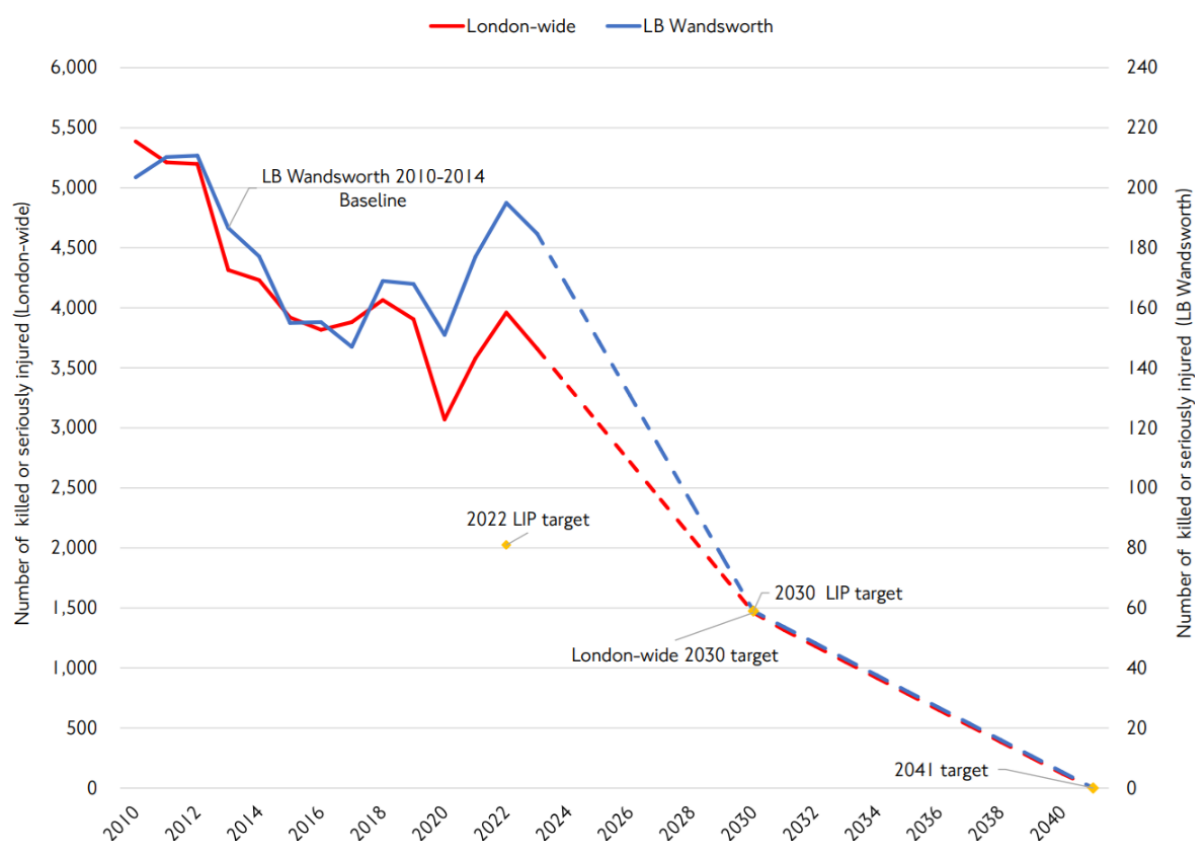
Progress has been mixed. The 2022 interim target of a 65% reduction in KSIs (from 2005–2009 baseline) was missed for London, with only a 38% reduction achieved, and the 2030 target is unlikely to be met without accelerated action. Wandsworth was also off track, it required 2022 KSI figures to be around 81 however actual KSI figures were 195 casualties. Vision Zero objectives are embedded in

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/transport/road-accidents-and-serious-accidents>

the LIP, though in common with all boroughs this will be extremely challenging to achieve, this includes limiting KSI to 59 or less in 2030 and have zero KSI by 2041.

The only major mode to achieve the target decline so far has been car occupants in terms of casualties, while those walking and cycling continue to make up an increasing share of serious and fatal casualties. Note that TfL is currently in the process of updating its Vision Zero strategy. Figure 12 below shows Wandsworth target compared to London, the trend data from 2024 (dotted lines) is estimated trend.

Figure 12. Wandsworth: Number of People Killed or Seriously Injured in Road Collision, Source: TfL



Borough Context

Between 2017 and 2024, overall road casualties decreased by 22%, falling from 1,135 to 888 (see Figure 1). In terms of comparison (STATS19, 2017 to 2024), Wandsworth ranks:

- 9th among Inner London boroughs for overall casualties.
- 3rd highest for TfL roads (across all boroughs)
- 19th for borough roads (across all boroughs)

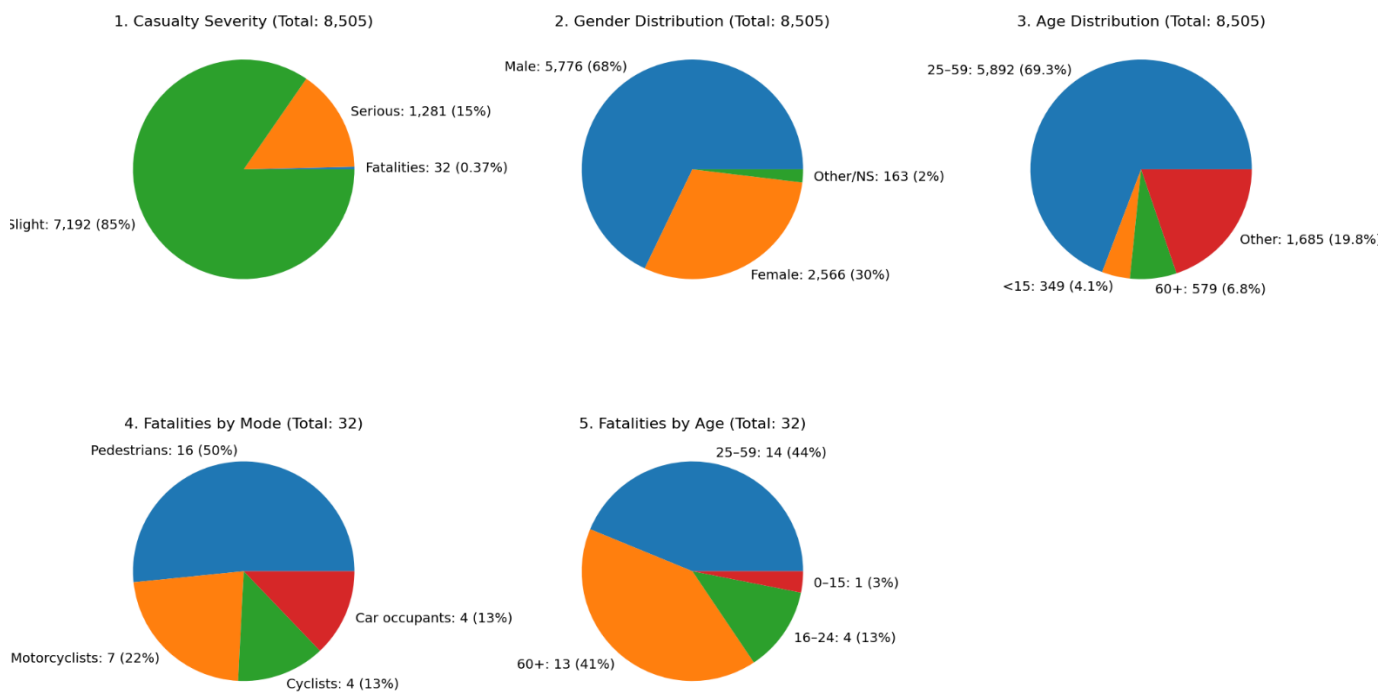
Casualty distribution is outlined in Figure 13. Borough roads accounted for 52% of casualties (12 fatalities, 614 serious injuries) while TfL roads accounted for 48% of casualties (20 fatalities, 667

serious injuries). While fatalities were more concentrated on TfL roads (63%), reduction in casualties was more significant on TfL roads, which saw a 27% decline from 2017 to 2024, compared to a 16% drop on borough roads. This is likely to be due to the TfL roads in Wandsworth becoming 20 mph.

Despite the lower numbers, the proportion of casualties have shifted toward specific transport modes.

- Cycling casualties rose from 24% (in 2017) to 34% (in 2024), motorcycle casualties increased from 25% (in 2017) to 29% (in 2024), resulting in these groups representing 28% and 30% of the total mode share, respectively.
- Conversely, there were notable improvements in safety for other groups, as car casualties fell from 22% to 16% and pedestrian casualties decreased from 21% to 15%.
- Demographics: The majority of the 8,505 total casualties were men and adults aged 25–59, though fatalities are most frequent among pedestrians and older adults. In incidents involving children, over the eight years, there were 48 casualties and 1 fatality.

Figure 13. *Casualty Distribution, 2017 to 2024. STATS19, Wandsworth*



Speed

Historical international data shows a 30-mph collision is five times more likely to be fatal than one at 20 mph due to the impact of vehicles at higher speed and severity of injury.¹⁷ Casualty statistics in Wandsworth (2017 to 2024), shows fewer fatalities on 20 mph roads compared to those with higher limits (note fatalities mostly involved pedestrians and motorcyclists on higher-speed roads).

Casualties by speed limit (2017-24):

- 20 mph roads: 3,630 casualties (43%), 9 fatalities.
- 30 mph roads: 4,671 casualties (55%), 22 fatalities.
- 40 mph roads: 190 casualties (2%), 10 fatalities.

Time and Geography

Road safety analysis continues to emphasise that when and where a journey occurs are primary determinants of risk. From the data reviewed:

- Collisions peak occurred during weekday commuting hours, and higher speed roads remain strongly associated with severe outcomes.
- Geography of casualties highlights the influence of traffic density, road hierarchy, and junction complexity, with repeated patterns emerging on the borough's strategic road network. Fatalities and serious injuries for the time period analysed have been concentrated on higher-speed (30–40mph) roads both in the north and south of the borough as well as major TfL-managed junctions.
 - Fatality clusters mainly in north Wandsworth and busy junctions:
 - Clapham Junction/York & Falcon Road (21.8% of fatalities).
 - Wandsworth High Street/East Hill (9.3%).
 - Queenstown Road/Silverthorne Road (12.5%).
 - Serious injury clusters:
 - Pedestrians: Tooting High Street, Putney High Street, Battersea Park Road.
 - Cyclists: Upper Tooting Road/Balham High Road, Battersea Park Road, Upper Richmond Road.
 - Motorcyclists: Trinity Road, St John's Hill, Tooting High Street.

Deprivation

TfL's "Inequalities in Road Danger" in London report shows a strong link between deprivation and casualty rates:

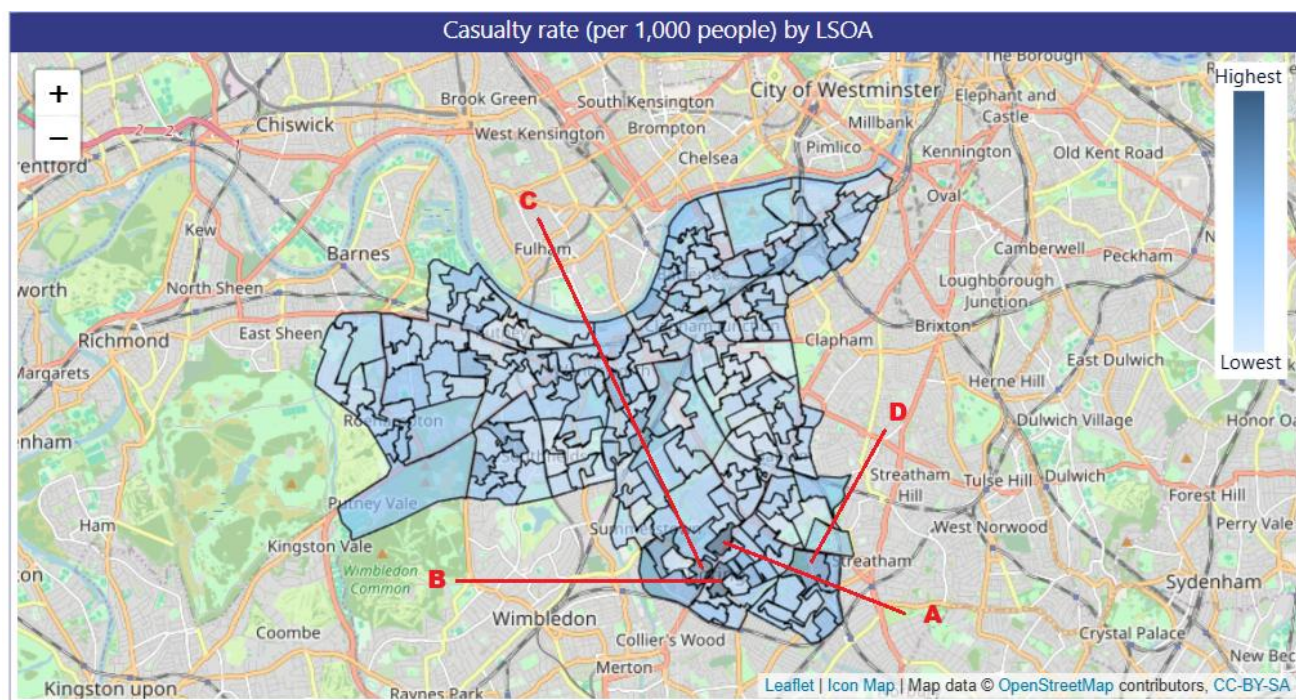
- Most deprived 30% of areas have two times higher KSI rates per km of road than least deprived areas.
- Men have double the fatal/serious injury rate compared to women in deprived areas.
- Young adults (16–30) have the highest KSI rates; next highest is 31–59 age group.
- Vulnerable modes (motorcycling, cycling, walking) account for 80% of KSIs.

¹⁷ <https://www.itf-oecd.org/sites/default/files/docs/speed-crash-risk.pdf>

In Wandsworth, KSI rates in the most deprived areas fell from 0.54 to 0.41 per 1,000 population (2022–2024). Top deprived clusters (2022–2024) included (Figure 14):

- Upper Tooting Road (12.9 per 1,000) – Location A
- Tooting High Street/Mitcham Road (11.7) – Location B
- Garratt Lane area (10.5) – Location C
- Tooting Bec Road area (9.7) – Location D

Figure 14. Deprivation areas and Casualties, 2012 to 2024. STATS19, Source: TfL



People with Disabilities and the Elderly

Both people with disabilities and the elderly face a higher risk of road injury and fatalities, particularly as pedestrians or cyclists, and disproportionately suffer more severe consequences when involved in a collision due to their vulnerability. It is important that relevant road safety measures are considered when changes are made in or near places with a higher proportion of elderly or disabled residents. Within Wandsworth, based on the 2021 Census, there are high concentrations of disabled residents (as identified under the Equality Act) in:

- Roehampton (17%)
- Lavender Hill East (15%)
- York Gardens (14.5%)

Those aged 60 and over within the borough are concentrated in:

- Battersea Park (16.4%)
- Putney West (14.25%)
- Furzedown (13.5%)

6. Council Approach to Road Safety

Despite progress, Wandsworth faces persistent challenges in reducing KSIs, especially for vulnerable road users and deprived areas. Sustained investment, enforcement, and partnership with TfL are critical to meet Vision Zero targets.

Current Position

- Wandsworth does not have an adopted road safety plan, but safety is being addressed through:
 - Local Implementation Plan.
 - Wandsworth Walking and Cycling Strategy to support active travel in the borough.
 - School Streets programme. This restricts motor vehicle traffic outside school gates during drop-off and pick-up times to create safer, cleaner environments for children to walk and cycle. As of late 2024, the council has exceeded its target, with over 50% of primary schools in the borough participating in the scheme.
 - £10M annual investment in road/pavement maintenance (Decade of Renewal).

Key Initiatives

- Borough-wide 20 mph speed limit.
- Safer crossings (e.g., Putney Bridge).
- E-bike hire scheme enforcement. Many journeys are now being made in Wandsworth using rental e-bike however many are left dangerously obstructing pavements or roads causing a hazard for pedestrian and vehicles.
- Education campaigns for vulnerable users including children. This includes pedestrian training for school children (years 2 to 6) and road safety talks.
- Cycling training courses are available, free of charge, to children and adults who live, work, or study in Wandsworth.

Planned or Completed Schemes

- Cycling infrastructure: Queenstown Road, Burntwood Lane, Wandsworth Bridge, Putney High Street.
- Pedestrian improvements: Tooting Town Centre, Balham near schools.
- Major works: Burntwood Lane, Queenstown Road, Wandsworth Bridge.
- New zebra and push-button crossings.

TfL Responsibilities include

- Management of major routes (A3, A205, A24).
- Key projects:
 - 20 mph limits on TfL roads including A306, A214 and A3205.
 - Battersea Bridge upgrades (completed 2025).
 - Nine Elms/Battersea Park Road cycle route.
 - Safer Junctions Programme.
- Increased speed enforcement with Metropolitan Police.

Joint TfL–Wandsworth Actions (monitoring the above) plus

- Traffic management at Putney High Street and West Hill.
- Parking restrictions, bus stop relocation, lane reassignment.
- Addressing enforcement gaps (Council and TfL lacks powers; relies on Police).

Glossary of Terms

This glossary defines key terms, acronyms, and concepts used in the "Road Safety in Wandsworth: Public Health Review" report. Definitions are derived from the document's context and standard UK road safety terminology. Entries are listed alphabetically.

3 Es

A traditional road safety framework comprising *Engineering* (safer infrastructure and vehicles), *Education* (training and awareness campaigns), and *Enforcement* (policing and compliance). Increasingly complemented by public health and Safe System approaches.

AADF (Annual Average Daily Flow)

A Department for Transport (DfT) measure of average daily traffic volume at specific count points. Used to assess vehicle use on major roads.

Active Travel

Walking, cycling, wheeling, or scooting as modes of transport. Promoted to reduce emissions, improve health and reduce road danger.

Borough Principal Road Network (BPRN)

A-category roads managed by London boroughs, often serving buses, higher traffic volumes and major junctions. TfL may fund maintenance.

Casualty

A person injured or killed in a road traffic collision. Classified as:

- *Fatality*: death within 30 days of a collision
- *Serious injury*: e.g. fractures, hospitalisation
- *Slight injury*: minor injuries such as sprains or cuts

Collision

A road traffic incident involving at least one moving vehicle that results in injury, as recorded in STATS19 data.

Deprivation

A measure of socio-economic disadvantage, often based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). More deprived areas typically experience higher road casualty rates.

DfT (Department for Transport)

UK government department responsible for national transport policy, including publication and oversight of STATS19 collision data.

Fatality

A road user who dies as a result of a road traffic collision within 30 days.

Healthy Streets Approach / Scorecard

A framework for designing people-focused streets. The Scorecard compares boroughs on key metrics such as 20 mph coverage, cycle lanes, and casualty statistics.

HGV (Heavy Goods Vehicle)

Large goods vehicles (lorries) often associated with increased risk for vulnerable road users due to size and visibility limitations.

KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured)

A key road safety measure combining fatalities and serious injuries. Used to benchmark Vision Zero progress.

LEZ (Low Emission Zone)

An established emissions charging zone in London targeting older polluting vehicles to improve air quality.

LSOA (Lower Layer Super Output Area)

Small census-based geographic units used for detailed socio-demographic analysis (approx. 1,500 population per area).

MTS (Mayor's Transport Strategy)

London's statutory transport strategy setting objectives around safety, sustainability, congestion and Vision Zero.

NAO (National Audit Office)

Parliamentary body responsible for auditing UK public sector organisations, including assessments of road and infrastructure maintenance.

NTS (National Travel Survey)

A national survey capturing self-reported travel behaviours and injuries. Often reveals higher injury rates than police-recorded statistics.

Pedal Cyclist

A person riding a standard or electrically assisted bicycle (but not powered motorbikes or scooters).

PHOF (Public Health Outcomes Framework)

A national framework monitoring key public health indicators. Indicator B10 assesses KSI casualties per billion vehicle miles.

Red Routes

London's major strategic roads managed by Transport for London (TfL). Stopping is restricted to keep traffic flowing.

Road User

Anyone using a road, including drivers, passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, and mobility aid users.

Serious Injury

Injuries that require hospital treatment or have lasting impacts (e.g., fractures, internal injuries, severe lacerations).

Slight Injury

Minor injuries not requiring extensive medical care, such as cuts, bruises or minor shock. Often under-reported.

STATS19

The UK's official police-reported dataset of personal injury road traffic collisions. Includes detailed information on location, time, vehicles, and casualty characteristics.

TfL (Transport for London)

Organisation responsible for London's transport systems, including Red Routes, public transport, and road safety initiatives such as Vision Zero.

TLRN (Transport for London Road Network)

London's strategic road network, commonly referred to as Red Routes.

ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zone)

A 24/7 charging zone for vehicles not meeting emissions standards, extended to all London boroughs (including Wandsworth) in 2023.

Vision Zero

London's long-term strategy to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from the transport network by 2041, guided by the Safe System approach.

Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs)

Road users most at risk of serious harm due to lack of physical protection—primarily pedestrians, cyclists, and motorcyclists. VRUs make up the majority of KSIs in Wandsworth.