

COUNTY COUNCIL

20 JULY 2016

QUESTIONS FROM AREA ACTION PARTNERSHIPS

QUESTIONS FROM TEESDALE AAP

Question 1

Sadly serious and fatal road accidents continue to happen all too regularly on roads in the Teesdale area. Although the Teesdale area statistically does not have any more accidents than elsewhere in County Durham they do tend to be more serious when they do happen. Two young men lost their lives in August 2014 on the road between Barnard Castle and Whorlton. A Cockfield man was killed on the A688 near to Staindrop in April 2015. The accident black spot at Barford Corner has claimed two lives since last November and in May 2016 a Newton Aycliffe man died after a crash near to Cockfield. What can the County Council and its partners such as the Police do to help reduce the number of serious road accidents in the Teesdale area?

RESPONSE

In the last year fatal and serious traffic collisions have more than doubled in the Constabulary area. Detailed analysis has found no distinctive pattern in the road users age, road type, policing area, time of day, or cause. However, the most common cause of collisions in which people were killed or seriously injured was failing to look properly.

The Safe Durham Partnership will continue to deliver a range of road safety education and training schemes that target vulnerable road users such as Bike wise which is taking place this Sunday 24 July at Police HQ and encourage all our local schools to participate in countywide programme such as Wise Drive which is being run between 5-23 October.

This popular programme already has 24 schools and 1200 students currently signed up which will enable us to educate pupils, improve road safety and tackle careless and dangerous driving.

In addition we will conduct enforcement campaigns that address seatbelt compliance, speeding, mobile phone use and drink driving.

The Council is in the process of updating its Speed Management Strategy and its Road Safety Strategy and these this will be reported to Cabinet later this year.

I thank the Teesdale Partnership for their interest in road safety and I urge you to work with our road safety teams to further improve road safety in your area to promote initiatives like Bike Wise and encourage all your secondary schools in your area to sign up and take part in the forthcoming Wise Drive event.

Question 2

Concerns have been raised regarding the ongoing closures of the A1 which is directing traffic through Barnard Castle. Damage has been done by HGV's to the historic Abbey Bridge and to the Market Cross a Grade 1 listed building. What work is being done with Highways England to look at alternative routes, especially for HGVs and to minimise the number of A1 closures?

RESPONSE

We have asked Highways England to consider a wider diversionary strategy to take vehicles away from Barnard Castle, for example by using the A19.

In addition we have also requested additional warning signs and CCTV cameras to monitor the use of Abbey Bridge during the current works.

QUESTION FROM MID DURHAM AAP

Mid Durham AAP, along with several other AAPs, are registered as 'Dementia Friends' and have been working with partners to develop awareness and services for our residents who suffer from, or affected by, dementia. How are the County Council and its partners seeking to support and care for people with dementia and their carer's and what do they think the AAPs could do to support them?

RESPONSE

Mental health is a key priority for the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board and is one of the strategic objectives within the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy as follows:

"To improve the mental and physical wellbeing of the population"

A multi-agency Dementia Strategy for County Durham and Darlington, to enable people to live well with dementia, has been agreed by the County Durham Health and Wellbeing Board.

Recent service developments include dementia friendly communities, which will focus on improving inclusion and quality of life for people living with dementia, dementia friendly swimming and singing for the brain.

Five dementia advisors have been appointed working across County Durham who can provide support for those with concerns about their memory and their families/carers.

Work is taking place to develop an integrated dementia pathway for County Durham and Darlington which will take those with a diagnosis of dementia through to end of life care with support available within local communities, for example through the dementia advisors.

Building on dementia friends and dementia friendly communities we would see AAP's providing support, not just through dementia specific projects work, but to take dementia into consideration in all their work to enable those people in the early stages of the disease and their families to participate in their communities.

We would encourage AAP's to explore the opportunity to become dementia friends with the Durham Dementia Alliance.