

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE REGENERATION AND SUSTAINABLE  
COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2010**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sherreard (Chairman)  
Councillors FitzGerald, Nelson-Gracie, Paine, Ross,  
Thick and Vizzard

**APOLOGIES:** There were none

**81. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast**

**Resolved:** That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

**82. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**83. Notification of Substitute Members**

There were no substitute Members.

**84. Notification of Visiting Members**

It was noted that Councillors Chittenden and Mrs Joy were visiting Members who wished to speak on Agenda Item 8, 'Road Safety Update'.

**85. Disclosures by Members and Officers**

There were no disclosures.

**86. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information**

**Resolved:** That all items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

**87. Minutes of the Meeting held on 24 November 2009**

**Resolved:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2009 be agreed as a correct records and duly signed by the Chairman.

**88. Road Safety Update**

The Chairman welcomed Steve Horton, Kent County Council's Road Safety Team Leader to the meeting and thanked him and his team for their help with the Committee's report and its road safety event in August 2009.

The Committee received a presentation on road safety in Kent, attached at Appendix A. This highlighted the causes of crashes, Maidstone's road casualty profile in 2008 and Kent Highways Services (KHS) work to reduce the number of crashes in Maidstone.

As part of the presentation Mr Horton advised the Committee of the following:

- There were around 650 people Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) as a result of crashes in Kent each year;
- The KHS road safety team focuses on road user education, training and publicity and used KSI data to inform its work across the county rather than concentrating on purely fatal crash data as this may have prevented larger issues being identified;
- Crashes were statistically more likely to happen in Maidstone compared to other Kent districts as it had one of Kent's highest populations and traffic flows. It was not known why Canterbury had fewer crashes despite its population count, although road layouts were considered an attributing factor;
- Heavy Goods Vehicle crashes were less of an issue in the Borough on non motorway and non trunk roads than those involving other users; and
- Casualty data up to September 2009 indicated an increase in the number of motorcyclist crashes in the 25 plus age group compared to previous years.

In answer to a question Mr Horton explained that severe weather was not the cause of serious crashes as drivers tended to amend their driving style to reflect the weather conditions. He asserted that where the driving style was amended, the severity of the crash was reduced. Furthermore, Mr Horton felt that the number of KSIs may have been reduced during the periods of severe weather in December 2009 to January 2010 because the number of people on the roads was less, although data was not yet available.

In response to a question, Mr Horton advised Members that Kent Highways Services (KHS) had thought that there was a connection between the number of road traffic collision casualties in High Street Ward and the night time economy. Further investigations had revealed that there was not an apparent connection between the night time economy and KSIs beyond the fact that there was increased traffic movement on the road. The Committee requested to receive a 2 year breakdown of Maidstone's crash data showing times of day and days of the week to inform its monitoring of Maidstone's road safety.

A Member highlighted that the Kent Fire and Rescue Services had recently reported a continuation in the high concentration of Road Traffic Collisions in Maidstone and asked how Kent Highways Services (KHS) were working with Kent Fire and Rescue Services to address this. Mr Horton advised that KHS coordinated its education and campaigns with its partners through the CaRe partnership (Casualty Reduction Partnership). This prevented conflicting events and enabled opportunities to work together with its Partners. Opportunities were being explored to target road safety

messages at 17 – 24 year olds, such as by going to night clubs and pubs. Motorbike drivers were being specifically targeted through a DVD for new bikers and officers attending bike events, such as at Brands Hatch or at cafés where bikers congregated at. KHS had also built up a close relationship with a bike dealership to assist in promoting road safety messages in Maidstone. Members requested further information on KHS's subsidised a Pass Plus scheme for newly qualified drivers.

Mr Horton informed Members that the Government had reviewed legislation with regard to new drivers, including issues such as a nil blood alcohol limit, restricted number of passengers and a driving curfew, however changes to legislation were not forthcoming. In response to a question, Mr Horton felt that 'P' plates should only be used as a tool to identify new drivers if new-driver legislation was introduced. He noted it was important to not alienate young people by introducing laws without just cause and felt it was particularly important to educate new drivers.

Mr Horton advised Members that research had shown greater levels of impairment had occurred through the use of hands free mobile equipment, than by drivers who were at the blood alcohol limit. Mr Horton however noted that it was difficult to enforce a ban on hands free mobile equipment, although he would support this.

A Councillor considered that communication with Parish Councils could be improved, noting that she had recently had to source road safety information to feed into a Parish Council newsletter. Members noted KHS Liaison Officers work with Parish Councils, but felt that KHS could do more to improve communication of road safety messages to all Parish Councils. The Committee agreed that KHS should circulate road safety campaign literature and posters to all Parish Councils and that it request that it be included in newsletters and on Parish notice boards.

The Committee also discussed the following:

- Whilst car design had contributed to reducing the number of KSIs, it also meant drivers felt safer and many took more risks as a consequence;
- It was anticipated that campaign work in the Borough would continue but that it was reliant on continued funding;
- A Member felt that it would be useful to use graphs to display the number of crashes per population head against other districts to see if Maidstone had a significant issue in comparison to other districts on a proportionate basis. Mr Horton advised this had previously been done and agreed to update and distribute this information to the Committee; and
- Members felt that it would be useful to have maps over a three year period which showed the location of crashes in Maidstone and the age group of those involved.

The Committee congratulated Mr Horton and his team on the vast amount of work undertaken in promoting road safety in the Borough and agreed to monitor Maidstone's road safety on an annual basis.

**Resolved** That:

- a) The Committee be provided with the following additional information to inform its monitoring of Maidstone's road safety:
  - A 3 year breakdown of Maidstone's crash data showing times of day and days of the week;
  - More information with regard to the Pass Plus Driving Scheme;
  - Graphs showing the number of crashes per population head in Maidstone in comparison to other districts in Kent; and
  - Maps showing the location of crashes in Maidstone and the age group of those involved over a three year period.
- b) Kent Highways Services improve its communication with all Parish Councils by circulating road safety campaign messages for their newsletters and to enable publicity in their parishes; and
- c) The Committee maintain a watching brief on Maidstone's road safety and receive annual updates.

The meeting adjourned from 7.55 pm to 8.00 pm.

## **89. Contaminated Land Strategy**

The Chairman welcomed the Assistant Director of Environmental Services, Steve Goulette, the Environmental Health Manager, Sheila Davison and the Senior Pollution Officer, John Newington to the meeting to discuss the draft contaminated land strategy.

Mr Goulette outlined the main changes to the strategy including:

- Revisions with regard to updated legislation and guidance;
- Updated information regarding developments in spatial planning and conservation;
- More details with regard to review and assessment;
- Amendments to the prioritisation process;
- Updated stakeholders list;
- Inclusion of Scrutiny recommendations; and
- The re-establishment of the working group.

Mrs Davison outlined that following a period of public consultation; a decision would be made by the Cabinet Member for Environment on implementing the draft strategy based on consultation responses.

In response to a question Mr Newington clarified that all suspected incidences of contamination within the Borough reported by the public or identified through environmental searches for public conveyance checks were investigated and dealt with appropriately. The Council or the Environment Agency may be responsible for the remediation of contaminated public land, as detailed in the draft strategy.

The Committee thanked the witnesses for attending and congratulated them on their hard work in producing the strategy.

The Chairman noted that the Committee had previously resolved to review the contaminated land but that it was awaiting the outcome of the draft strategy. The Committee agreed that the work undertaken by officers was extensive and agreed that a further review of contaminated land was not required.

**Resolved:** That the Committee remove the contaminated land review from its work programme.

## **90. Future Work Programme and Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

The Committee considered its future work programme and noted that it only had 3 meetings left in the municipal year. Members considered possible items it could review following the removal of the contaminated land review item and agreed to consider an update on 'Gypsy and Traveller Sites' at its next meeting. Members also considered reviewing transition towns, but felt that this would be a major review and agreed to add it as a work programme suggestion for the Committee in 2010/11.

A Councillor suggested a one-off review on junk mail as a number of residents had made complaints regarding the amount of unsolicited mailings and menus they had received. The Committee considered the possible scope of the review, noting possible outcomes could include:

- A 'no junk mail' sticker scheme endorsed by the Council and supported by local businesses; and or
- Revisions to the Council's website to include information about opportunities to reduce unsolicited mails, such as advertising the Mailing Preference Service.

The Committee felt that it would be useful to interview business representatives, including; Town Centre Management and the Chamber of Commerce. Members also suggested that it may be useful to interview a representative from the Post Office to discuss unaddressed mailings delivered by Postman. A number of Members felt that given the economic climate it was not prudent to introduce a costly scheme, however the Committee felt a cost effective scheme could be introduced, such as a tear off sticker below existing recycling stickers distributed by the Council. The Committee felt there was scope for a one off review and agreed to add it to its work programme. Members agreed to collate any junk mail they received in the next two months to inform the Committee's findings.

The Chairman updated the Committee on the progress of the Road Safety recommendations, noting that Cabinet would be formally responding to its recommendations at its meeting on 10 February. A number of Parish Councils had responded, but Members were asked to also encourage their ward's Parish Councils to respond. Members were also advised that Councillor FitzGerald was presenting the road safety report to the Safer Maidstone Partnership on 4 March 2010. The Committee was disappointed that it had not received a response to its recommendations to Kent County Council and agreed that the Chairman pursue this.

The Committee noted the sections of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions that were relevant to the Committee's remit and agreed to maintain a watching brief.

**Resolved** That:

- a) The topic of Transition Towns be recommended as a topic for review in 2010/11;
- b) A one off review of Junk Mail be undertaken;
- c) Members collate any junk mail they receive in the next two months;
- d) The Chairman pursue a response from Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Highways and Waste regarding its road safety recommendations; and
- e) The Forward Plan be noted.

**91. Duration of the Meeting**

6.30 pm to 8.30 pm.



**Steve Horton**  
**Road Safety Team Leader**

**education, training and publicity**



Introduction

What causes crashes

Maidstone road casualty profile 2008; compared to Kent

How casualty reduction is delivered (3E's)

KHS, Road Safety ETP activity 06 – 08 and beyond

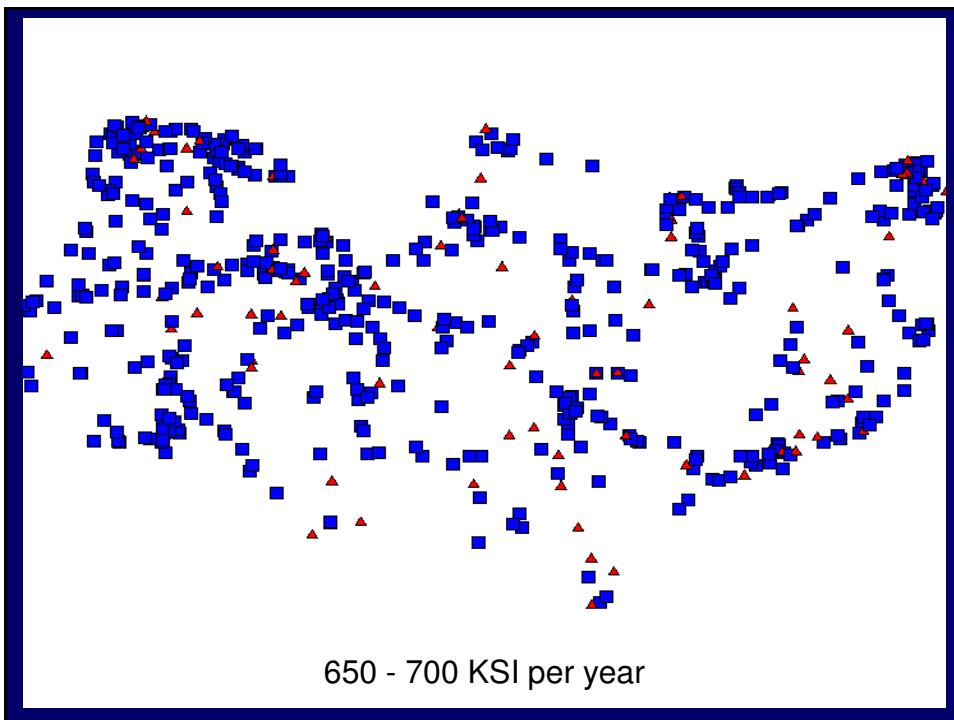


To provide ...

an insight into the specific road casualty profile for Maidstone Borough

identify the areas of concern

an insight into the work of the KHS Road Safety ETP team in Maidstone







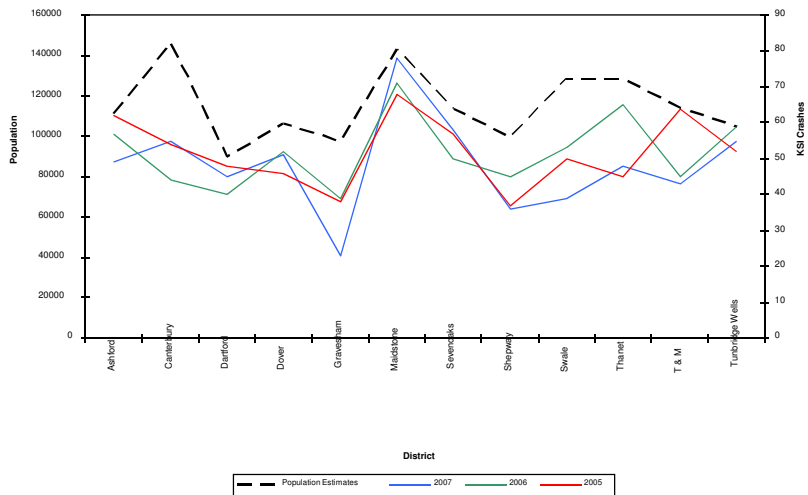


Causes of road crashes:

The Road	2%
The Vehicle	3%
The Human	76% .... 95% ( <i>road user behaviour</i> )

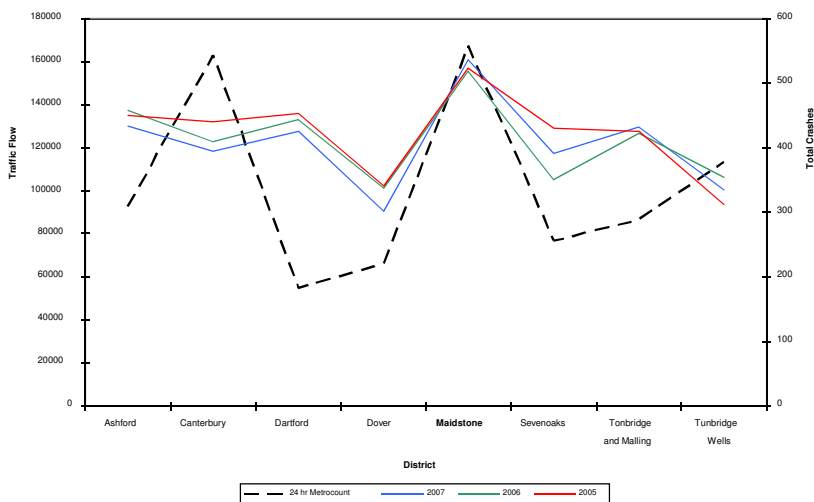
- Transport Research Laboratory

The number of KSI Crashes recorded on Kent (KCC and HA) Roads by District compared to **population** estimates recorded in 2006



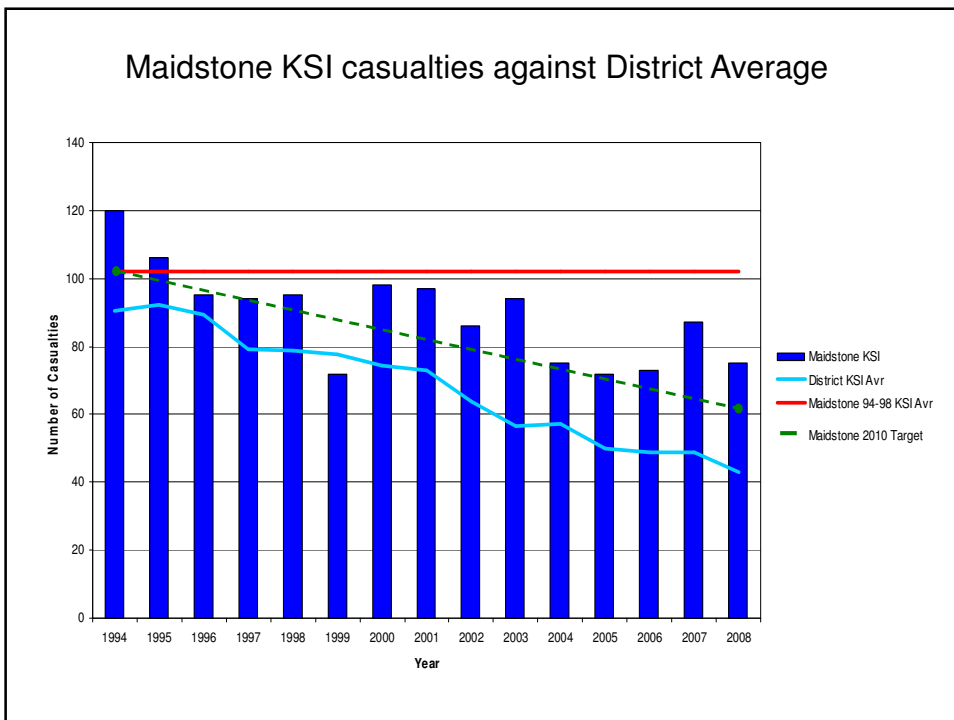
The number of Total Crashes recorded on Kent (KCC and HA) Roads by District compared to 24 hr **Metrocount Flows** recorded in 2006

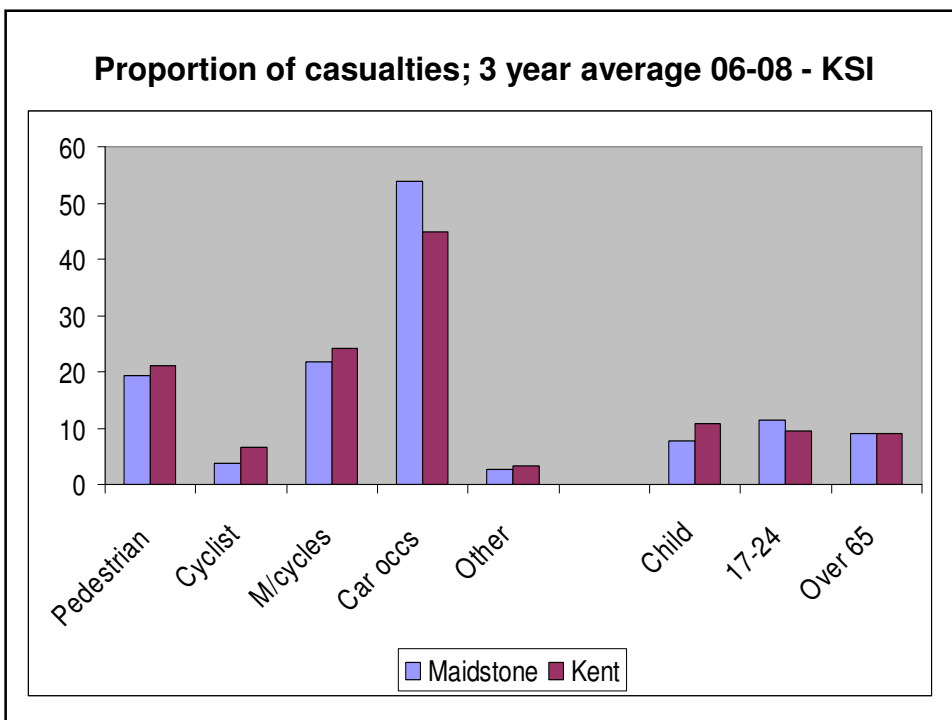
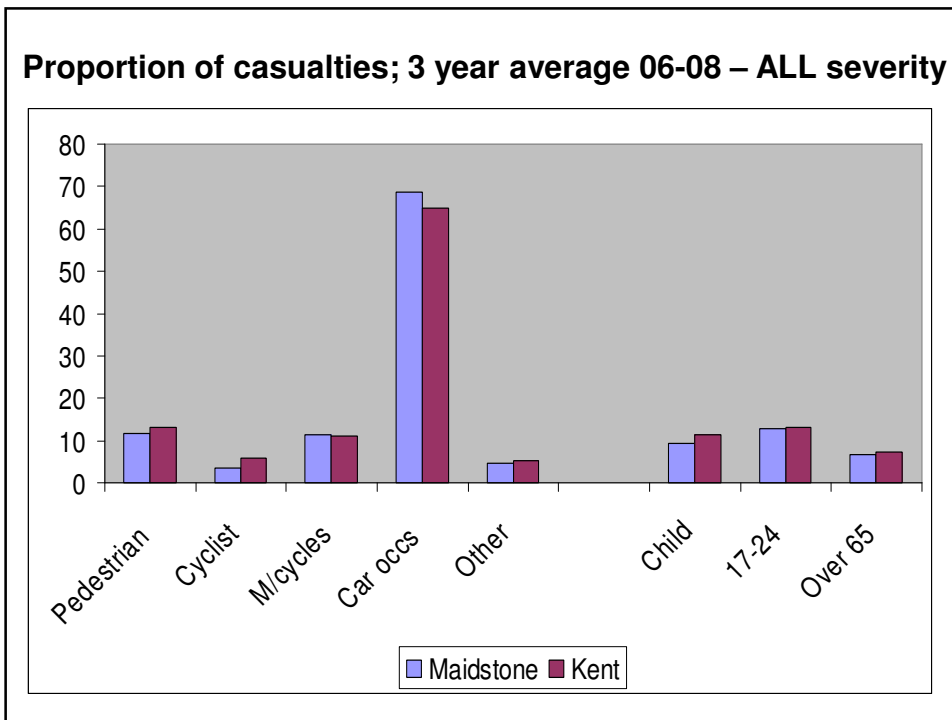
N.B. It should be noted that Gravesham, Shepway, Swale and Thanet have been excluded from the graph as no Metrocount information is available for these Districts





Casualty profile in Maidstone Borough, compared to the county profile ...



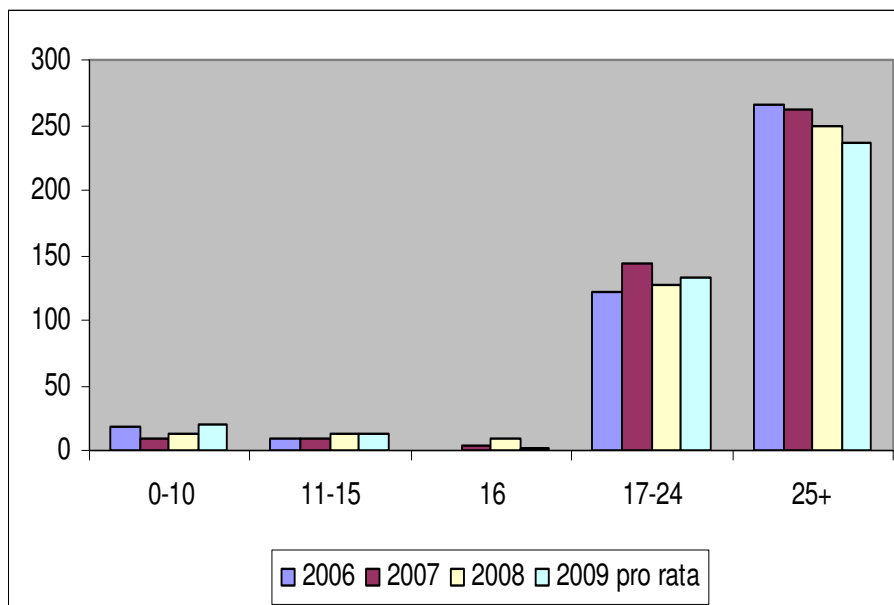




Identified areas for concern; i.e. those highest in proportion (%) and highest in number (no.) - KSI:

- %) Car occupants; especially Young People (17-24)
- no.) Motorcyclists
- no.) Pedestrian

Car occupant casualties by age; Maidstone 06-08 with pro rata 09





Car occupants:

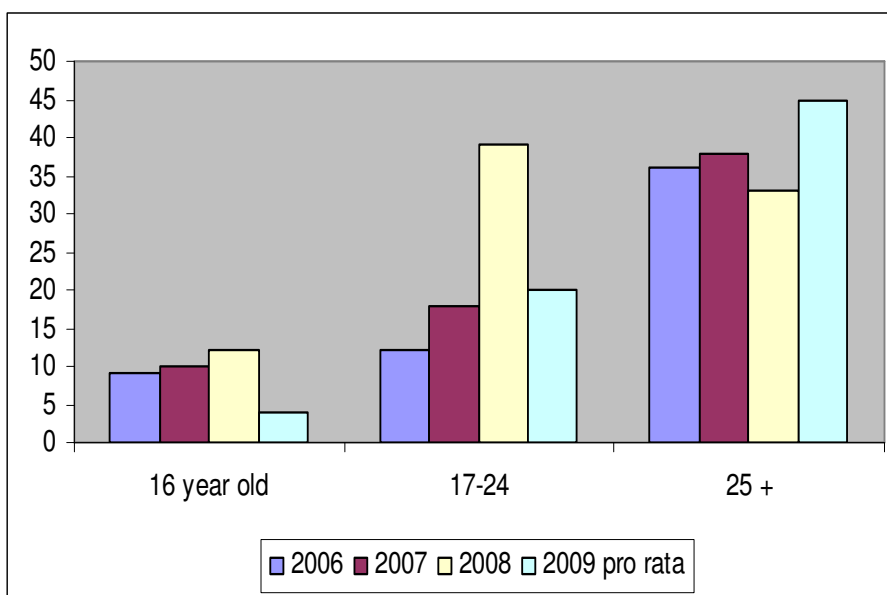
Overall to 2008;

Further increase in car crashes in 2008 against 2007.

Maidstone is consistently above the district average (large flows) with little change in stats over 10 years

Young people still being involved in crashes

Motorcyclist casualties by age; Maidstone 06-08 with pro rata 09





Motorcyclist profile:

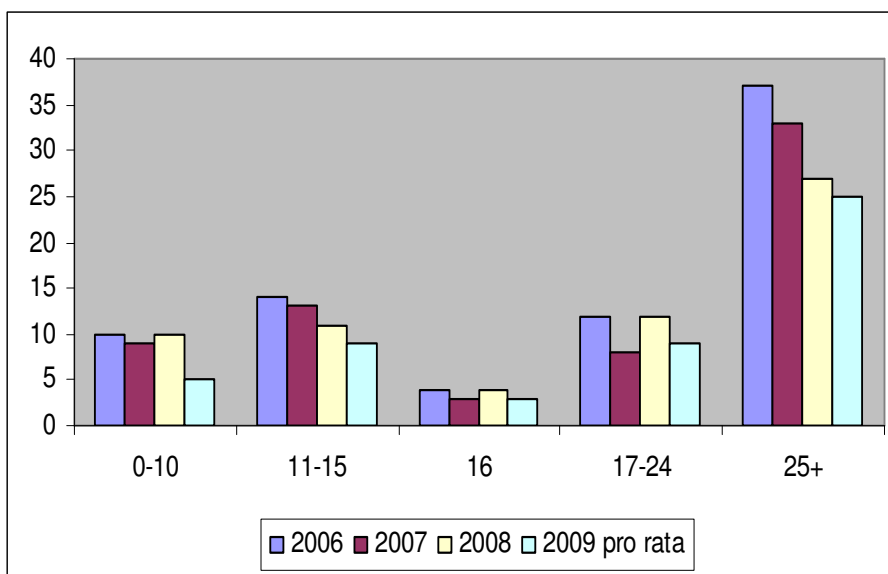
Overall to 2008;

Further increase in p2w crashes in 2008 against 2007.

Increasing issue with over 25's on big bikes?

Young scooter riders still a concern

Pedestrian casualties by age; Maidstone 06-08 with pro rata 09







Pedestrian profile:

Overall to 2008;

Slight decrease in pedestrian casualties in 2008 on 2007

District average decrease is steeper than Maidstone

17-24 year olds show no decreasing trend

The 3 E's ...

**Education**

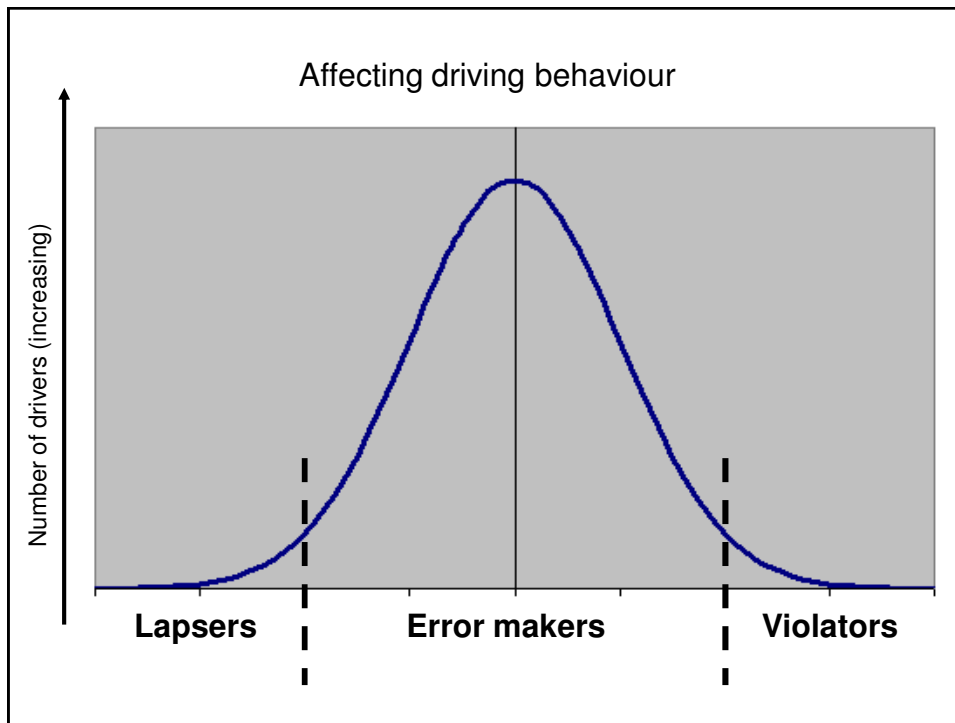
**Casualty  
reduction**

**Engineering**

(e.g. Traffic calming,  
interactive signs)

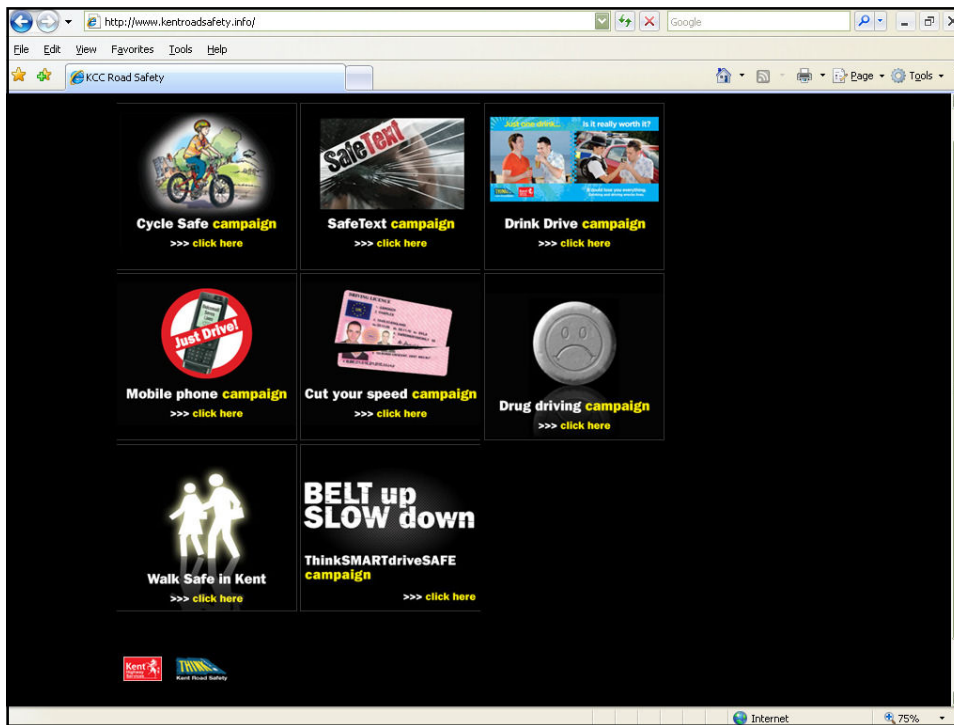
**Enforcement**

(e.g. KMSCP, Police  
enforcement activity)



**KHS Road Safety ETP input in 2007 to 2009**

	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Education input (Maidstone)	2,548 pupils	5,541 pupils	4,834 pupils
Campaigns (county)	10	4	9
(Campaigns for Maidstone)	0+2 launched	0+1	2+2)
Training (county)	3,800	4,410	7,050



Issues for 2010 / 2011, based on indicative data from 2009 against known data for 2008

In-car safety (inc seat belts AND avoiding crashes) esp 0-24 year olds.

17-24 moped and <125cc riders

25+ riders esp 500cc+

16-24 peds



### Activities planned for 2010 – subject to available budget

Carry on with current Education and Training activities, e.g. SS, KR, YDC, TIE, etc.

Campaigns aimed at seat belts / child seats – 0-24 year olds

YD campaigns – inc. speed, Drugs, Drink, Mobile Phones

Motorcyclist campaign – 500cc+ / 25+ year old riders

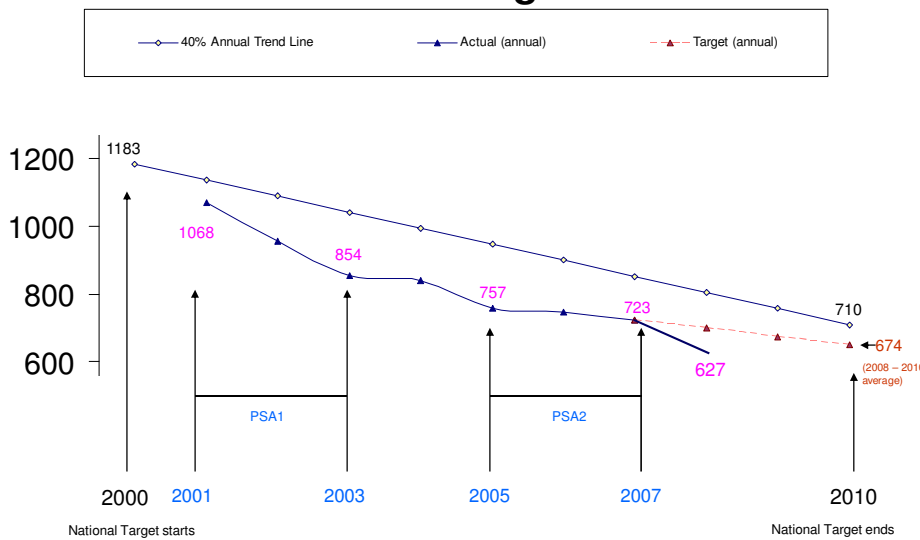
Pedestrian campaign - 16-24 year olds

Already planned:

Pedestrian campaign (11-16 year olds) in March

Ghost Lids – scooter riders (16-19 year olds) in March

### National targets



Killed and Seriously Injured



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**Road Safety Team Leader**

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