

# P-06-1356 Introduce comprehensive safety measures at the A477 'Fingerpost' junction.

Y Pwyllgor Deisebau | 11 Medi 2023  
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Reference: SR23/6132

**Petition Number:** P-06-1356

**Petition title:** Introduce comprehensive safety measures at the A477 'Fingerpost' junction.

**Text of petition:** On Saturday 13 May 2023 Ashley Thomas Rogers tragically lost his life at the A477 'Fingerpost' junction travelling towards Pembroke. His death marked the third fatality on that stretch of road within the space of 12 years. Further, there have been innumerable near misses on what is known locally as a 'black spot' for road traffic accidents. Enough is enough. This petition calls upon the Welsh Government to do the right thing and prioritise human life over trivial budgeting pressure.



# 1. Background

The A477 fingerpost junction is the junction of the A477 with the A4075 turning for Pembroke.

Ashley Rogers, a 29 year old motorcyclist, lost his life on the morning of 13 May while travelling to work. The petition indicates that Mr Rogers is the third motorcyclist to be killed at the junction in 12 years. The letter from the Deputy Minister for Climate Change to the Chair also makes reference to further “collisions and near misses” at the junction.

The junction has long been a focus of calls for action on road safety. Steps to improve it were announced in 2012 following calls from the community and local politicians. Improvement works were completed in 2014, and were subject to subsequent Road Safety Audits..

However, calls for further action have continued since, including an earlier petition submitted in 2016 calling for construction of a roundabout (below).

The A477 trunk road is the responsibility of the Welsh Government and the South Wales Trunk Road Agent (SWTRA) – one of two agents which manage the Welsh trunk road on the Welsh Government’s behalf. The A4075 is a local road and is the responsibility of Pembrokeshire County Council.

# 2. Welsh Government policy and action

Currently speed limits on Welsh roads other than motorways are set using guidance published in 2009 known as Setting Local Speed Limits in Wales. The Llwybr Newydd: the Wales Transport Strategy, published in 2021, commits to review the approach to setting speed limits. The Welsh Government website makes clear that the guidance is being revised in light of its 20mph speed limit policy and “will take in to account policies such as Net Zero Wales and the Wales Transport Strategy”.

The Welsh Government published its Road Safety Framework in 2013. This set three targets to improve road safety so that by 2020, compared to the baseline average for 2004-2008, there would be:

- 40% fewer people killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads;
- 25% fewer motorcyclists killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads; and

- 40% fewer young people (aged 16-24) killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads.

The Welsh Government's statistical release on [police recorded road accidents 2020](#) (published 2021) described progress towards the three targets. This notes the likely impact of Covid-19 in lowering accident rates below what they would have been had the pandemic not occurred. Therefore, it considers average data for the period 2016-2019 in assessing progress, concluding that the target for total killed and seriously injured and for young people have been exceeded. However, "relatively little progress has been made towards the motorcyclists target".

The road safety framework was reviewed in 2018. The current [National Transport Delivery Plan](#) commits to:

... review our road safety framework to support our Vision Zero approach to road safety, based on the belief that no death or serious injury is acceptable on roads. This will support the delivery of our legal obligations on accessibility and safety as a highways authority and complement our work on active travel, road space reallocation and speed limits.

The timescale for the update is given as "2022 to 2024".

The final report of the Welsh Government's roads review panel was published in February. Its conclusions and the Welsh Government response [are summarised in this Senedd Research article](#).

The Welsh Government generally accepted the reports recommendations, including the two headline recommendations to establish a new set of purposes and conditions for future road investment. These have been included in its new [Roads Policy Statement](#).

The future purposes for road building will be limited to supporting modal shift, climate adaptation, supporting sustainable access to economic development sites, and to "improve [road] safety through small-scale changes".

The Deputy Minister's letter to the Chair says a report investigating collisions and near misses at the fingerpost junction has been produced by the Welsh Government and SWTRA. They have "committed to a programme of short and medium term measures at the junction in 2023/24".

In the short-term, SWTRA will implement signage / road marking changes and "possible minor junction layout changes" along with u-turn prohibitions. In the

medium term, the Deputy Minister says they will “assess the suitability and enforcement requirements of a speed restriction on this section and provide a business case for the introduction of traffic signals”.

The letter references both the review of speed limit guidance and the roads review. With regard to the roads review, it says:

Currently, the intention is to introduce small scale changes before committing to larger engineering measures so as to minimise future land take for highways, minimise carbon emissions, encourage modal shift and reduce dependency on the private car.

### 3. Welsh Parliament action

The Petitions Committee considered a petition calling for a “roundabout for the A477/A4075 junction” between January 2016 and January 2020. This noted that “the current road configuration has not resolved the problems on this dangerous stretch of road”.

Committee correspondence with the Welsh Government highlighted an extensive Road Safety Audit undertaken following the 2012-14 junction improvement works. At the time, the Petitions Committee agreed to close the petition as “the junction is currently being actively reviewed”.

Mr Rogers’ death has been raised on a number of occasions in plenary by Sam Kurtz MS on 16 May, 6 June and 5 July. The Deputy Minister’s response to the question on 5 July sheds further light on the detail of the issues at the junction, the action taken in response and the implications of the roads review report:

In terms of the specific area that Sam Kurtz highlights, the Nash Fingerpost junction on the A477, the Welsh Government and the trunk road agents have investigated collisions and near misses at the site. Their study included CCTV monitoring, which captured driver behaviour and sought to establish if there were any issues with the junction's operation, as it is a standard-constructed junction. It was found, as part of the monitoring, that there are some instances of large vehicles blocking visibility, there are some vehicles using the junction for u-turns, and some vehicles are so-called overshooting the junction—that is to say they are turning right from the A4075 but stopping within the A477

westbound lane. The study has recommended infrastructure changes and is further investigating options.

In terms of the broader corridor, the roads review looked in detail at schemes to address safety. It strongly said that we should be looking at individual instances, and dealing with those, and that one of the main tools at our disposal was in fact lowering speed limits, rather than making engineering changes as a default. That, of course, has the advantage of being able to be done quickly, to be done cheaply, and with minimal carbon impact. That is now very much part of the suite of approaches we take to tackling areas of road safety, and I'll be happy to keep the Member up to date with the progress that we make with our studies.

Every effort is made to ensure that the information contained in this briefing is correct at the time of publication. Readers should be aware that these briefings are not necessarily updated or otherwise amended to reflect subsequent changes.