

P-06-1475 Urgently improve the safety of the A458, Middletown, Powys in light of continuous dangerous driving

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Reference: SR24/9617-1

Petition Number: P-06-1475

Petition title: Urgently improve the safety of the A458, Middletown, Powys in light of continuous dangerous driving

Text of petition:

Following many crashes & the tragic death of a local resident on the A458, Middletown (outside Bank Farm), the Community Council & Local Councillor has called for urgent safety improvements on this stretch of road to help prevent dangerous overtaking where there are two hidden dips. A recent response from the Minister for Transport states "we don't have any current plans for road safety improvements at this location". We cannot wait for another death. We urge the Welsh Government to act.

Local residents, as well as many other members of the public who regularly travel this road, are upset and frustrated that nothing more is currently being considered by the Welsh Government to improve the safety of the road in this area. The Cabinet Secretary should attend a site meeting to further discuss the concerns.



In order to improve this stretch of road, urgent consideration needs to be given to providing the following:

- A permanent speed camera
- The double white 'no overtaking' lines extended in both directions
- The road resurfaced, specifically the red tarmacked areas.
- A flashing light that indicates a driver's speed and saying there should be 'no overtaking'.
- A flashing light to highlight that there is a car in the hidden dip ahead.

As part of the road safety review, we would like the speed of the road to be taken into consideration and whether reducing the speed would help cease any future accidents.

1. Background

The Welsh Government is the highway authority for the Welsh trunk road and motorway network including the A458. The North and Mid Wales Trunk Road Agent (NMWTRA) has responsibility for the day to day operation and maintenance of the road.

CrashMapUK, which produces an interactive map of police recorded traffic collision data, shows 3 "slight" and 4 "serious" incidents on the road in the Middletown area between 2018 and 2022. Guidance on the definitions used to categorise incidents is published by the Department for Transport (DfT). It should be noted that the data only includes collisions that resulted in a personal injury and were reported to the police within 30 days of the accident.

2022 data is the most recent available through CrashMap. However, as reported in the media, and highlighted by the petitioner, collisions in 2023 resulted in serious injuries and a fatality on the stretch of road in question.

In addition to other safety measures, the petitioner calls for a lower speed limit to be considered. The Welsh Government is responsible for setting speed limits on trunk roads in line with its current guidance issued in 2009. This guidance is in the process of being reviewed in light of the default 20mph speed limit policy. In

response to a written question relating to a different trunk road, the Welsh Government stated in 2023 “we will review the speed limits across the trunk road network, following publication of the [updated] guidance”.

2. Welsh Government action

In his letter to the Chair dated 19 November, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales, Ken Skates MS outlines work undertaken on the road to assess the issue of overtaking.

He states that CCTV and telematic surveys have been used to determine “the volume of overtaking movements occurring”. He says the results were inconclusive however:

...as officials have attended the site and seen the overtaking movements first hand, they will undertake a further CCTV survey when traffic flows are lower to see whether this has any effect on the findings.

He states that once the survey has been completed, officials will consider suitable mitigation measures to prevent overtaking. However “not all of the measures put forward by the petition will be applicable”.

3. Welsh Parliament action

In August, Russell George MS tabled a written question asking for an update on any safety improvement works taking place on the road. In response, the Cabinet Secretary advised that road markings had recently been renewed following concerns from local residents. He also highlighted the investigative study referred to above that was being conducted at the time.

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.