



## Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety

### Public Opinion Survey 2006 Final Report

#### Submitted to

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# 1 Executive Summary

## 1.1 Background to the survey

Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety is working towards targets set in the Government's road safety strategy *Tomorrow's roads – safer for everyone*. In order to reduce the number of serious accidents and fatalities on the roads of Lancashire, the Partnership aims to change public perception of what constitutes acceptable behaviour. To assess whether perceptions are changing, the Partnership regularly consults with members of the public, and has commissioned annual Public Opinion surveys since 2001. Each survey has been managed by ORC International. The following report outlines in detail the results of the 2006 survey, and, where appropriate, data will also be included from the five previous surveys.

## 1.2 Methodology

In 2006, face-to-face interviews were conducted on the street with 1,149 residents of Lancashire. Quota guidelines were applied to the sample that became a stratified random sample. Interviews were conducted with participants who lived in:

- Blackburn
  - Blackpool
  - Chorley
  - Clitheroe
  - Garstang
  - Great Harwood
  - Kirkham
  - Lancaster
  - Leyland
  - Nelson
  - Ormskirk
  - Padiham
  - Preston
  - Rawtenstall / Haslingden
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## 1.3 Key findings

Topline data has been used to provide some key findings from the research.

### 1.3.1 Safety cameras and Speed Indicating Devices (SIDs)

Net agreement<sup>1</sup> with a series of statements has been calculated, and trend data shown in table 1.1 shows that there has been a 6% decrease in the number of participants who felt that there were too many safety cameras in their area (from 37% in 2004 to 31% in 2006). However the data indicates that overall attitudes towards safety cameras have not changed dramatically between 2004 and 2006.

**Table 1.1: Q1 – Net agreement with statements on safety cameras**

	2004	2005	2006
Safety cameras are an easy way to make money out of motorists	67%	75%	65%
The primary aim of safety cameras is to save lives	68%	73%	69%
There are too many safety cameras in our local area	37%	38%	31%

**Sample base: All participants – 1,149**

In 2006, whilst there was general agreement that the main aim of safety cameras is to save lives (69%), 65% of participants remained suspicious of the process, believing that cameras are an easy way to make money out of motorists.

SIDs are a relatively new concept and have been received well nationally. In 2006, residents of Lancashire were slightly more supportive of the installation of such signs than they were of safety cameras. Over three quarters (77%) felt that more signs should be installed in their local area, compared with 50% of participants who disagreed that there were too many safety cameras in their local area. Three quarters of participants also believed that the introduction of a SID sign reduces the number of accidents at the location.

### 1.3.2 Seat belts

Just under three quarters of respondents (73%) supported the use of regulations to ensure that people wear seat belts. This has not changed significantly between 2001 and 2006 (77% in 2001, 74% in 2002, 75% in 2003, 79% in 2004 and 71% in 2005). However one in ten residents found it acceptable to drive a short distance without a seat belt. This figure also remains consistent with 2005 findings (10%).

There was a lack of awareness regarding who is responsible for making sure that passengers are wearing their seat belts, over half (58%) believed that the driver of a vehicle had to make sure all passengers, including those over the age of 14, wore a seat belt.

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<sup>1</sup> Net agreement indicates the number of participants who either agreed strongly, or tended to agree with a statement.

### 1.3.3 Speeding and speed limits

Almost two thirds of participants (64%) felt that 'everyone speeds', and 26% believed that it was acceptable to drive at 90mph on a quiet motorway.

There has been an increase between 2005 and 2006 in the percentage of respondents believing that breaking each speed limit by just one mile per hour means that a driver is speeding.

- For the 30mph speed limit, the number of participants agreeing that breaking the limit by one mile per hour meant that the driver was speeding increased by 1% from 43% in 2005 to 44% in 2006.
  - At 40mph the increase was from 35% in 2005 to 41% in 2006
  - At 50mph the increase was the largest at 6% (from 31% to 37%)
  - For the 60mph speed limit, the increase was 5% from 31% in 2005 to 36% in 2006
  - At 70mph the percentage increased from 31% in 2005 to 26% in 2006
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The survey discovered that participants' confusion over speed limits was greatest in relation to dual carriage ways. Half believed that the correct speed limit on a dual carriage-way was 60mph, and just 25% accurately said that it was 70mph. That being said, it is encouraging that accuracy has increased between 2005 and 2006 with the percentage of participants selecting the proper speed limit for each type of road increasing. This has been demonstrated in table 1.2.

**Table 1.2: Q7 – % of participants stating accurately speed limits on different road types**

	2005	2006
Motorways	80%	89%
Dual carriage-ways	19%	25%
Single carriage-ways	43%	44%
Roads in built up areas	84%	92%

**Sample base: All participants – 1,149**

Forty four percent of residents interviewed did not feel that there were enough information signs informing drivers of the relevant speed limit, and 16% believed that drivers speed because they do not understand the speed limit.

### 1.3.4 Tackling road accidents

When asked what they felt to be the most appropriate way of reducing road accidents, almost two thirds (64%) recommended introducing tougher penalties. Sixty-one percent advocated the introduction of tougher drink driving laws.

### 1.3.5 Awareness

It was pleasing to note that awareness of the Partnership increased from 24% in 2005 to 30% in 2006. Newspapers were the most frequently noted source of information on the Partnership (38%). However the survey demonstrated that a significant minority of residents still did not understand the aims of the Partnership (when asked, 18% said that they did not know what the aims of the Partnership were). The survey also discovered that residents who were familiar with the Partnership were also more likely to be aware of recent safety campaigns.

- 32% of participants familiar with the Partnership were aware of the Mobile phone campaign compared with 13% of participants who did not know of the organisation.
  - 29% of participants familiar with the Partnership were aware of the BEE Safe always wear your seatbelt campaign compared with 10% of participants who did not know of the organisation.
  - 23% of participants familiar with the Partnership were aware of the One Chance to Belt Up campaign compared with 9% of participants who did not know of the organisation.
  - 23% of participants familiar with the Partnership were aware of the World Cup Drink Drive initiative compared with 8% of participants who did not know of the organisation.
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- 17% of participants familiar with the Partnership were aware of the PAUSE Take a second to think about your driving campaign compared with 3% of participants who did not know of the organisation.
- 11% of participants familiar with the Partnership were aware of the Ride Safe Back Safe campaign compared with 3% of participants who did not know of the organisation.

Half of the respondents would not know where to go to find additional information on road safety.

### 1.3.6 Safety campaigns

The greatest level of awareness was found in relation to the Mobile phone campaign (19% of participants were aware of the campaign). However, the most effective safety campaigns, in the view of participants, were the BEE Safe always wear your seat belt (25% of respondents familiar with the safety campaigns felt that this was the most effective campaign) and the World Cup Drink Drive initiative (20% found this effective).

## 1.4 Comparisons

Comparisons have been made between variables and points of interest will be mentioned below. Survey responses have been cross-referenced by:

- ❖ Area of residence
- ❖ Age
- ❖ Whether the participant had ever been stopped by the Police

### 1.4.1 Area comparisons

Please note that the base total for each area is low, therefore actual figures are used in addition to percentages to express the data. Appendix C includes information on confidence levels for each area. It should be noted that analysis has not been undertaken for Great Harwood, as the sample size (17) was not sufficiently robust.

#### **It was discovered that:**

- Belief that the main aim of safety cameras is to save lives was highest in Rawtenstall and Haslingdon (66 or 84% of respondents expressed net agreement<sup>2</sup> with the statement that 'The primary aim of safety cameras is to save lives' and this can be compared with the overall average of 69%).

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<sup>2</sup> Net agreement indicates the number of participants who either agreed strongly, or tended to agree with the statement.

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- Support for the introduction of more SIDs signs was greatest in Rawtenstall and Haslingdon, Kirkham and Blackburn. 49 or 89% of participants in Rawtenstall and Haslingdon, 54 or 89% of respondents in Kirkham, and 39 or 89% of participants in Blackburn expressed net agreement with the statement that 'SIDs should be more widely used in my local area' compared with the average of 77%.
- Participants from Nelson were supportive of the use of seat belt regulations (61 or 86% of respondents in the area expressed net agreement with the statement 'I would be happier if seat belt regulations were more strictly enforced' compared with the average of 73%).
- Respondents in Leyland were most likely to express net agreement with the statement that 'It is acceptable to drive a short distance without wearing a seat belt (16 or 28% compared with the average of 10%). However they were also most likely to agree that 'It is acceptable for passengers in the back of the car not to wear a seat belt (16 or 28% expressed net agreement with the statement compared with the average of 7%).
- 45, or 78% of participants in Leyland agreed that 'everyone speeds, compared with the average of 64%. 26 (45%) also agreed that 'A 30mph speed limit is too slow for most of today's cars', compared with the average of 28%.
- 88% (or 51) residents in Leyland had not heard of the Partnership compared with the average of 69%. 45 (78%) did not know where to go for additional information on road safety, compared with the average of 50%.
- Awareness of all safety campaigns was higher in Chorley, and this has been shown in table 1.3

**Table 1.3: Awareness of safety campaigns**

Question text	Answer	Overall average	Highest scoring response	Lowest scoring response
Were you aware of BEE Safe always wear your seat belt?	Yes	16%	Chorley 29%	Lancaster 0%
Were you aware of the World Cup Drink Drive initiative?	Yes	13%	Chorley 28%	Lancaster 2% Leyland 2%
Were you aware of the Mobile phone campaign?	Yes	19%	Chorley 35%	Leyland 0%
Were you aware of Ride Safe Back Safe?	Yes	5%	Chorley 15%	Leyland 0%
Were you aware of PAUSE Take a second to think about your driving?	Yes	7%	Chorley 15%	Leyland 0%
Were you aware of One Chance to Belt Up?	Yes	13%	Chorley 28%	Lancaster 0%

### 1.4.2 Age comparisons

Young drivers (aged between 17 and 21) were more likely than drivers over 60 years of age to:

- Agree that it is acceptable to drive short distances without a seat belt (14% of the cohort expressed net agreement with the statement compared with 6% of participants aged over 61).
- Agree that it is acceptable to drive at 90mph on the motorway when there is no traffic (41% of the cohort expressed net agreement with the statement compared with 13% of participants aged over 61).
- Feel that it is acceptable to drive after one or two drinks (22% of the cohort expressed net agreement with the statement compared with 12% of participants aged over 61).
- Agree that it is acceptable to use a mobile phone whilst driving (16% of the cohort expressed net agreement with the statement compared with 1% of participants aged over 61).

### 1.4.3 Whether the participant had been stopped by the Police

Over one quarter (27%) of participants had been stopped by the Police, 73% had not. The greatest differences discovered between these participants related to:

- Whether the participant was familiar with SIDs (82% of those who had been stopped by the Police were aware of the signs compared with 55% of those who had not been stopped, a difference of 27%)
- Whether the respondent knew where to go to get additional information on road safety (62% of those who had been stopped by the Police knew how to source additional information compared with 40% of those who had not been stopped, a difference of 22%)

Whether the participant was familiar with the Partnership (43% of those who had been stopped by the Police were aware of the Partnership compared with 25% of those who had not been stopped, a difference of 18%)

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