



# Home Safe and Well

Our approach to health, safety and wellbeing

We are committed to our aim, that **by 2040:**

## No one should be harmed when travelling or working on the strategic road network

Achieving this requires fresh thinking and innovative approaches towards health, safety and wellbeing across the industry. This document sets out our approach.

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# Foreword

Our vision can be summed up simply; we want everyone who works with us and everyone who travels on our network to get home safe and well.



That means getting home for the people we love and for the things that we love doing. In Highways England and throughout our supply chain this matters more than anything else.

We've come a long way since 2015, when our five-year health and safety plan was first published. This is due in no small part to the widespread commitment of our people and our supply chain, and the improvements we have made. Home Safe and Well takes this one step further; it is more than a set of actions, it is an approach which should be marbled through everything we do.

By further developing our approach to health, safety and wellbeing, together we will:

- Build a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture
- Promote greater ownership
- Embrace innovation
- Place more importance on health and wellbeing

Our company and directorate plans describe this change in more detail. These plans are owned by Highways England's Executive Team and overseen by our Board. They are less prescriptive, more collaborative ways of working. They encourage each area of our business, our supply chain partners and every individual, to define and own their own commitment to getting everyone home safe and well.

We are all responsible for making this change happen. If you have any ideas and want to be more involved in our proactive approach to health, safety and wellbeing, please contact the Health and Safety team at

**[homesafeandwell@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:homesafeandwell@highwaysengland.co.uk)**

I'd like to thank everyone who has helped develop this approach which has been truly collaborative from the start. I am now asking everyone to play their part.

Jim O'Sullivan  
Chief Executive, Highways England

# Why is our new approach important?



Home Safe and Well supports the delivery of our first imperative: safety. It also keeps customers and delivery at the heart of what we do. These three imperatives are what we are here to deliver as a company.

This approach gives us a framework for how we will display our values of safety, integrity, passion, ownership, teamwork, so that we deliver excellence in health, safety and wellbeing:

**1 Safety:** Safety is the core strand, woven through everything we do. Safety is both a value and an imperative. As an imperative: it is what we set out to achieve. As a value: it is how we go about achieving it.

We can't routinely eliminate risk. But we can recognise it, assess it, manage it, and make sure no-one comes to harm from it.

**Safety is the most important part of our work.**

**2 Integrity:** We should only give commitments we intend to keep and provide honest feedback in appraisals. We should not say one thing and do another. We should always act in accordance with the other values.

**3 Passion:** We care about what we do. We care about each other. We put energy into the things that are important to us.

**4 Ownership:** We take responsibility for doing things and making them happen.

**5 Teamwork:** We work with the people around us, not just for our own success but for their success too. It's not just about the people in our local team or directorate, but getting other directorates, contractors, suppliers, and stakeholders to work together and share goals so that everyone is successful.

In October 2015, we launched and published our health and safety five-year plan. This set out how Highways England would deliver health and safety up to 2020. We've grown as an organisation since then. Today people using or working on our strategic road network are less likely to be injured than they were in 2015. While we are encouraged by this, people are still being killed or injured when working or travelling on our roads, and we can't accept that. When we say we want everyone to get home safe and well, we mean it. It's important to us, and it should be important to you too.

Our 2015 plan provided a strong foundation from which to learn and improve as our industry adapted to new challenges. We're proud of what we've achieved so far.



Since 2015 we have:



**Reduced** the frequency of customers being injured, with the number of casualties per hundred million vehicle miles **down** from:

**11.45** to **9.37**



**Reduced** the rate of reportable accidents among our suppliers by two thirds:

**0.15** to **0.05** (AFR\*)



**More than halved** the reportable accident rate with our traffic officers:

**0.55** to **0.24** (AFR\*)



**Improved** our safety culture maturity by one level (from 'reactive' to 'calculative'), as shown in **Figure 1** (page 6)

Attained the highest **increased** scores in our employee engagement survey, against the following questions:

**"Highways England takes safety seriously"**

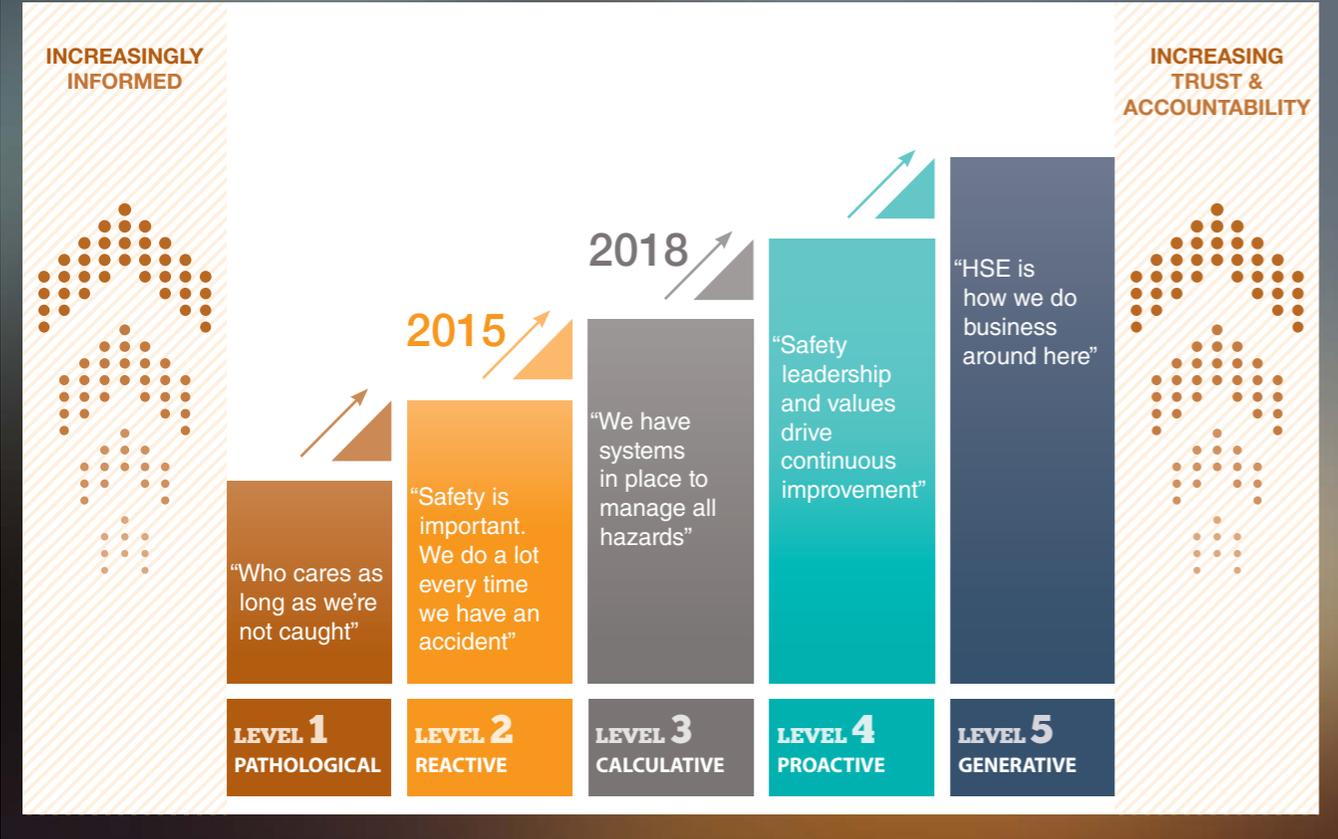
**81%** to **89%**

**"My work area is safe"**

**79%** to **83%**

\*Accident Frequency Rate

Figure 1: Heart and Minds maturity model



These improvements have been made at a time when more people are using our roads, and our investment activities are at an unprecedented level.

We've also increased our focus on wellbeing and will continue to do so. Our colleagues have been provided with professional support for issues from healthy lifestyle advice such as weight loss, alcohol and smoking cessation, to mental health support such as bereavement or trauma counselling.

We have collaborated across different sectors to focus on the issue of suicide prevention. We are delivering a broad range of actions, working with other agencies, via our Suicide Prevention Working Group.

We have also delivered measures to reduce the number of incursions into road works by road users. These include improved reporting by our suppliers, improved traffic management, education campaigns and enforcement where deliberate incursions occur.



Vehicle Checks campaign

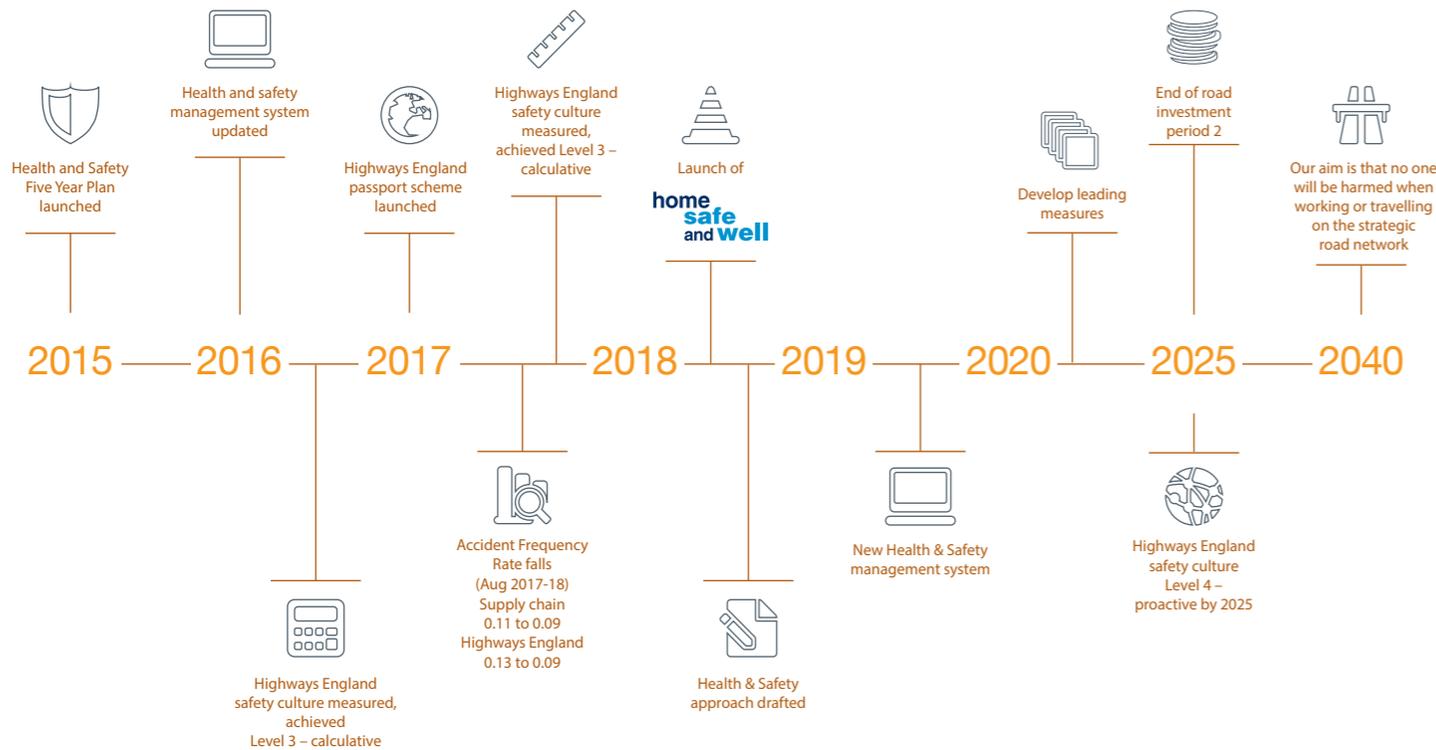


# Our safety journey

Our safety journey depicts what we've achieved so far. It recognises the amount of work needed to realise our ambition of no one being killed or injured on our strategic road network by 2040. Our aim is for colleagues in Highways England and our supply chain to increase personal

ownership for health, safety and wellbeing improvements. We will track our improvements to ensure that this is the case.

Our key milestones below are aligned to six focus areas, set out in the next section.



# Looking ahead: our focus areas

We want to make sure that we can take the right actions to deliver against our imperatives and live our values. We sought out the views of people across our company, in our supply chain, with our customers and other stakeholders. Together we looked at our performance since 2015, and identified six focus areas, that are critical to how we will go about improving health, safety and wellbeing for our employees, supply chain and our customers:

- We will grow and work with the best leaders in the industry, who understand that health, safety and wellbeing are intrinsic to how we do business
- We will have the right people with the right skills, who are experts at what they do and are committed to everyone fulfilling their potential
- Those working for or on behalf of Highways England will know what is expected of them, and will achieve this safely
- We will involve those who share our passion for what we do and seek out best practice so that we and others can learn from it
- As a company, we will have a hunger to seek out learning opportunities so that we can improve. We recognise that this will only be achieved within a fair and just culture
- Health, safety and wellbeing will be considered from the outset in everything we do, and risks eliminated wherever possible



These focus areas form the backbone of our plans to support our vision of getting everyone Home Safe and Well. We have set these out in more detail in the next section; these will be

used to help us integrate health, safety and wellbeing into everything we do, as we enter our second road investment period from 2020 to 2025.

# Effective leadership

We will grow and work with the best leaders in the industry, who understand that health, safety and wellbeing is intrinsic to how we do business.

Our leaders will role model the attitude, behaviour and conduct required to get everyone home safe and well. As such, health, safety and wellbeing will take precedence in the decisions they make and in the culture they create.

We recognise that in Highways England, anyone can demonstrate leadership, and will encourage people to take responsibility for their own actions while looking out for others.

Our senior leaders will be required to have improvement plans which focus on measurable outcomes based on risk, and set clear expectations for everyone.

Our senior leaders will be trained in behavioural science, as well as the technical aspects needed for their role. They will use this knowledge to lead their teams and to measure performance.

Leaders will be trained to encourage and empower others to intervene whenever they feel that health or safety is being compromised. We will invest in our leaders' communication skills, to ensure that our safety value is understood by everyone and is reflected in their work.

We will seek out any exceptional performance demonstrated by our colleagues in Highways England and our supply chain, and will celebrate and share it.



# Capable people

We will have the right people with the right skills, who are experts at what they do and are committed to everyone fulfilling their potential.

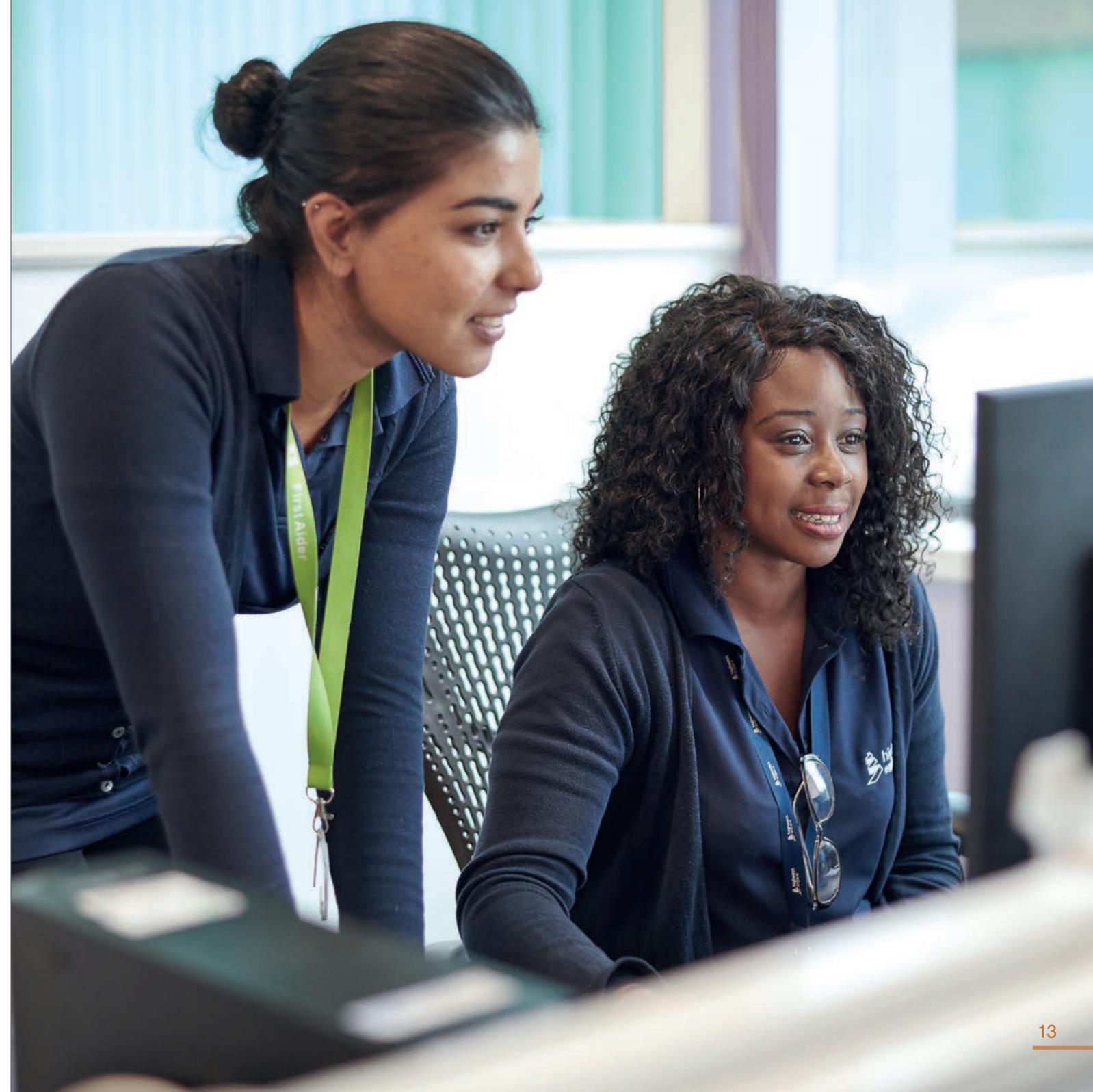
Our employee lifecycle, in particular our selection and development processes, will place considerable importance on health, safety and wellbeing skills, competence and attitudes.

From the first day of working with Highways England, our colleagues in our company and our supply chain will know why we are so passionate about safety as our first imperative (what we are here to do) and one of our values (how we go about it).

Highways England employees and our supply chain will be offered development in technical and behavioural health, safety and wellbeing skills. We will empower them to intervene in unsafe situations, resolve issues and seek improvements in everything they do.

Technology and the digital world will be used to reduce risk, and advance our approach to health, safety and wellbeing across our company and suppliers.

We will seek out best practice and embrace innovation, so that our colleagues have access to equipment and processes that enable them to carry out their work as safely as possible.



# Clear expectations

Those working for or on behalf of Highways England will know what is expected of them and how to achieve this safely.

To make sure that everyone knows their role, responsibilities and accountabilities, our processes will be clear, realistic and will only be in place if they add value to those using them. They will be easy to access and understand.

To achieve this, we will seek the views of those who rely on our processes. We will make changes when safer or more effective ways of operating come to light.

As a client, we will be clear about the outcomes that we require, but will turn to the expertise and experience of our supply chain colleagues on how best to achieve them.

We will measure health, safety and wellbeing performance predominantly through leading measures. We will provide insights which allow safe decisions to be made.

Our expectations will be underpinned by assurance activities to ensure that our suppliers and employees are performing as they should. We will use this information in our performance management processes as well as to help us choose who we work with.



# Engaged stakeholders

We will involve those who share our passion for what we do and seek out best practice so that we and others can learn from it.

Everyone we work with will share our vision of getting everyone home, safe and well. To drive greater engagement, we will host an online centre of excellence for health, safety and wellbeing in the highways industry. This will focus on learning and sharing areas of good practice.

We will seek the views of, and work with, internal and external stakeholders who share our passion for improving health, safety and wellbeing.

Together, through road user safety communications and our Driving for Better Business programme, we will continue to build relationships with our customers, so that they can understand how to safely use our roads.

We will work with strategic partners to lead on the industry's approach towards suicide prevention, and aim to eliminate suicides on our roads.

We will also collaborate with other successful advocates of health, safety and wellbeing outside of our sector so that we can learn from them, and them from us.



Driving for Better Business is a government backed programme to help employers in both the private and public sectors reduce work-related road risk, decreasing the associated costs and improving compliance with current legislation and guidance.



# A learning organisation

As a company, we will have a hunger to seek out learning opportunities so that we can improve. We recognise that this will only be achieved within a fair and just culture.

We will have a culture where open reporting is actively encouraged and rewarded. People will always be accountable for their actions, but will know that we operate a fair and just culture where mistakes can be freely reported without repercussion, so they are not repeated elsewhere.

When things go wrong, we will find out why so we can put them right. We will hold detailed investigations to establish the root causes, so that they can be eliminated.

We will monitor our performance and safety culture through leading indicators. We will analyse the reasons behind this performance so that we can make informed decisions about how to improve. We will do this in collaboration with colleagues in our supply chain.

We will make sure that clear communication and engagement channels exist, so that significant learning is shared with our employees and with those in our supply chain, as well as with our customers.



# Health, safety and wellbeing by design

Health, safety and wellbeing will be considered from the outset in everything we do, and risks eliminated wherever possible.

Our improvement plans will centre on integrating the vision of getting everyone home safe and well throughout everything we do – whether designing, building or operating. A home safe and well approach will apply to our roads, our facilities, premises and our processes. Designing out health, safety and wellbeing risks will be considered from the outset.

Our investment decisions will lead to improvements in health, safety and wellbeing. This applies equally to investment in our roads, our processes, our premises and to our people. We will promote technologies and working methods where the removal, replacement or automation of activities will remove or reduce the risk of harm.

We will also consider any potential mental health and wellbeing impacts for our colleagues and wider stakeholders, so that these can be effectively managed, reduced and treated.



# How Home Safe and Well becomes a reality

We will embed a home safe and well approach into the fabric of Highways England through the delivery of our corporate and directorate plans which support our imperatives and values:



## Home Safe and Well Corporate Plan

Our corporate plan will deliver activities that help us achieve our overarching objectives at Highways England and in our supply chain (see table on pages 23–25).



Our corporate plan will be governed by our Health and Safety team but will be owned by our Executive team. We will report our progress monthly to our Executive Safety Committee and bi-monthly to our Board Safety Committee.

We will review our corporate plan in line with industry and regulatory influences and this will take place at least annually.

“GETTING HOME SAFE AND WELL MEANS NOT TAKING SILLY RISKS, AND KEEPING MY COOL”

Themes	Our corporate activities	Description
<b>Effective leadership</b>  We will grow and work with the best leaders in the industry, who understand that health, safety and wellbeing is intrinsic to how we do business.	<b>Embedding Home Safe and Well into leadership development</b>	Develop leadership capability and ensure that health, safety and wellbeing is embedded throughout existing and future leadership development programmes.
	<b>Home Safe and Well skillset</b>	Ensure that leaders possess a technical health, safety and wellbeing development plan, tailored to their role, which enables them to effectively manage others.
	<b>Behavioural leadership</b>	Adopt a proven research-based approach towards safety behavioural improvements and deliver bespoke training to our leaders initially, and other colleagues to advance our safety behaviours.
<b>Capable people</b>  We will have the right people with the right skills, who are experts at what they do and are committed to everyone fulfilling their potential.	<b>Increased employee capability</b>	Establish a competency and training assurance system linked to an individual's development plan, that sets the expectation for the required level of health, safety and wellbeing knowledge and competence for everyone within our company.
	<b>Health, safety and wellbeing in the employee lifecycle</b>	From recruitment through to retirement, set clear expectations to integrate excellence in health, safety and wellbeing and how safety, customer service and delivery support each other to deliver our Home Safe and Well vision - embedding health, safety and wellbeing as an integral part of the relationship with our colleagues. Reflect this throughout the performance management process.
	<b>Highways England passport</b>	Develop a common structure for inductions and a means for providing evidence of training of our supply chain via the Highways England passport scheme.
<b>Clear expectations</b>  Those working for or on behalf of Highways England will know what is expected of them and achieve this safely.	<b>Valued processes</b>	Reduce the volume of our health and safety procedures by 50% and gain certification to ISO 45001. Use innovative and behavioural approaches to ensure that procedures are accurate, valued, realistic and are accessible at point of use.

Themes	Our corporate activities	Description
<b>Engaged stakeholders</b>  We will involve those who share our passion for what we do and seek out best practice so that we and others can learn from it.	<b>Sharing our stories</b>	Design and host an online centre of excellence for health, safety and wellbeing in the highways industry. Hold events which help to promote positive discussion of health, safety and wellbeing throughout teams both internally and externally. Focus on identifying, recognising and sharing areas of good practice.
	<b>Supply chain engagement and raising industry standards</b>	Set up a senior supply chain steering group, aimed at raising industry standards, through working groups, focused on highest risk. Enable sharing of good practice, areas for improvement and innovations to raise industry standards. Support our supply chain to achieve Driving for Better Business champion status.
	<b>Road user safety</b>	Continue to build on our National Casualty Reduction Incident Plan by working with our customers so that they understand how to safely use our network, that they have prepared and planned for their journeys ensuring that they are fit to drive and that their vehicle is safe before travelling. Support our customers journeys by creating a safer road network, providing advice and guidance and undertaking targeted initiatives to reduce risk, creating a network of safe driving advocates throughout Highways England employees, our supply chain and our customers.
	<b>Suicide prevention</b>	Work with external stakeholders and lead an industry-wide approach to suicide prevention, with the aim of eliminating suicides on our roads.

Themes	Our corporate activities	Description
<b>A Learning Organisation</b>  As a company, we will have a hunger to seek out learning opportunities so that we can improve. We recognise that this will only be achieved within a fair and just culture.	<b>Learning culture</b>	Develop an action-based learning culture for road worker and road user safety through a doubling of hazard and near miss reporting and professional investigation within a fair and just culture.
	<b>Reporting and analysis</b>	Develop a reporting tool that is easy to access and use, and provides feedback to the end user on progress with issues raised. Use analysis of information to highlight areas for improvement.
	<b>Leading measures</b>	Develop and report on leading measures that are indicative of the real risks and controls in the company, to assess performance and drive improvement.
<b>Health, safety and wellbeing by design</b>  The health, safety and wellbeing of employees, supply chain and road users will be considered from the outset in everything we do, and risks are eliminated wherever possible.	<b>Eliminating risk from the outset</b>	Implement new and innovative methods of road design and construction that eliminates risk to those constructing them, maintaining them or driving on them.
	<b>Embedding design into business processes and risk evaluation</b>	Undertake reviews by business area to assess the nature and extent of our health, safety and wellbeing risks and ensure they are used to inform action planning and assurance activities, to eliminate risk where possible for those using and working on the road network.
	<b>Innovation</b>	Investigate, prove and promote technologies and working methods where the removal, replacement or automation of activities will reduce or remove the risk of harm across our operations for our employees, supply chain and road users.
	<b>Health and wellbeing</b>	Prioritise health and wellbeing so they are treated as importantly as safety. Develop a renewed strategy that focuses on occupational risk and employee wellbeing and enables achievement of the Workplace Wellbeing Charter for England.
	<b>Tools and equipment</b>	Ensure that those at greatest risk always have the tools and equipment available to them, that they need to undertake their roles safely.

## Home Safe and Well directorates plans

In addition to the corporate plan, each Executive Director will own, develop and manage their own health, safety and wellbeing plan for their part of our company, supported by their health and safety advisors. These plans will focus on any specific priority areas that are unique to that business area.

This gives the ownership to each Executive Director and their teams, and places improvement right at the heart of what we do – with our people. These plans will support delivery of our imperatives and help to bring our values to life. Each directorate will use their usual governance and scrutiny, and others will audit their compliance within the spirit of this approach. Directorates will be called upon regularly to report their progress to our Executive Safety Committee.



# Measuring our progress

In the period to 2025, we have the following aspirations:

- Reducing the number of those killed or seriously injured on our roads by 20%
- Halving the number of lost-time incidents
- Halving suicides on our roads
- Halving service strikes
- Halving vehicle incursions into road works
- Halving bridge strikes
- Achieving the Workplace Wellbeing Charter for England
- Achieving ISO 45001 certification
- Doubling our hazard and near miss reporting
- Achieving level 4 cultural maturity



These aspirations will be supported by a range of leading measures that will determine the effectiveness of our improvement plans. These measures will be reported to our Executive and Board Safety Committees. We will actively seek out feedback internally and externally, including outside of our industry sector, and use this feedback to develop future learning plans and improve our systems to enable better decision making that ensures everyone gets home safe and well.

# What do you need to do?

As we developed this approach, it was very clear that those of you who work in our company, our supply chain, use our roads and our key stakeholders, all share our passion for ensuring that everyone gets home safe and well. You've offered us your support, which we value very highly, and we will keep you involved in our health, safety and wellbeing journey.

## This is our ask of you:

- If you are one of our colleagues, your commitment and contribution to Home Safe and Well should be reflected in your performance goals. Use your regular one to one conversations with your line manager to review progress and think where you can make a positive difference to people's lives.
- If you work on our roads, we rely on you to help us build, maintain and operate one of the most advanced road networks in the world. Talk to your line manager or safety manager, and consider how your role in connecting the country can really make a difference in ensuring we all get home safe and well, every day.

- If you are a customer, there are steps that you can take to make your journey safer: plan your journey; avoid anything that may distract you from driving; check your vehicle before setting out; follow instructions on our road signs; keep good lane discipline; take appropriate action when road conditions change; and stay calm when others behave unexpectedly.

This approach is a big step forward and a shared responsibility for all of us; we're asking you to take ownership and contribute towards stopping people being hurt, or worse. We ask you to intervene if you feel something is unsafe, give feedback on performance, and contribute to solving this together. Make your commitment to health, safety and wellbeing known - tell someone, and check in with them to hold you to account for what you need to do.







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