Road danger reduction in Bristol

This nine-month Knowledge Transfer Partnership project involved Bristol City Council, NHS Bristol and the University of the West of England. The aim was to explore an alternative approach to road safety called ‘road danger reduction’, which seeks to reduce danger on the roads at source and promote walking and cycling.

This project explored how a road danger reduction approach, reducing danger at source by reducing the speed and volume of motorised traffic, could be developed within Bristol and how this could align with wider transport objectives.

The road environment is a vital element when creating healthier and more sustainable places and communities. Safer roads impact not only on injuries, but also affect levels of walking and cycling and in turn health issues associated with lack of physical activity. One challenge of creating healthier and more sustainable communities, addressed in this project, is bringing together shared agendas to achieve common goals.

The project took a mixed methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods to answer the research questions. Guided by the project steering group, Tom Calvert, the KTP Associate, undertook an international review of the literature, conducted in-depth interviews with national experts and local policy makers in Bristol, carried out an analysis of road traffic collision data and an audit of current road safety policy in the city. Following this analysis, a number of recommendations were made, including the following:

- develop a road danger reduction vision for the city;
- extend the 20mph speed limit to all residential areas in Bristol, subject to the results of the current pilot 20mph areas;
- assess the impacts of proposed transport policies on walking and cycling, using existing approval mechanisms;
- the road safety engineering team should prioritise schemes according to walking and cycling promotion as well as according to casualty numbers;
- analyse collision data from road danger reduction perspectives;
- and develop danger reduction projects in the area of education, training and publicity.

The report was presented to senior officers at Bristol City Council, who commended the report and are considering its recommendations. The project was reported by local media, who highlighted the potential for this work to assist Bristol in becoming an healthier and more sustainable city, particularly in relation to the road environment.

Contact details

Project lead
Dr Paul Pilkington

Faculty
Health and Life Sciences

Project Team
Adrian Davis (NHS Bristol, and Bristol City Council), Michael Baugh (Bristol City Council), Tom Calvert (UWE)

Contact
Paul.Pilkington@uwe.ac.uk

Funder and programme
Knowledge Transfer Partnership, Technology Strategy Board

Timescale
January 2010 - August 2010