

Drivewise Fife Practice Exemplar

Name and Timescales

Drivewise Fife is an ongoing initiative and 2018 was the first year of operation.

Summary

Drivewise Fife is a road safety initiative seeking to reduce road casualties. It is being led by Fife Council's Safer Communities and relies on a partnership approach, with all Emergency Services committed to it. There are three modules for the initiative: Pre Driver (14-17 years), Skills for Life (17-25 years) and Older Drivers (65 years). Each age group has a course tailored to their learning needs. The initiative has been developed following Drivewise Borders, which has operated successfully in the Scottish Borders and has been agreed by a number of bodies that it is a very good and effective use of resources to reduce road casualties and improve road safety. The first year of the initiative was funded through a bid to Transport Scotland by Drivewise Borders, encompassing Borders and Fife initiatives as well as a partnership with a car dealership.

Need for Initiative

National statistics provided by Transport Scotland for road casualties indicate that road users in the younger age groups are more likely to be involved in road collisions and become casualties. The older age group are more vulnerable when involved in collisions physically and mentally and are more likely to be susceptible to injuries received.

Whilst road casualty figures in Fife have been falling over the years, there is a constant need to strive to prevent road users becoming casualties. Using a format that has worked elsewhere in Scotland provides a good opportunity to apply existing practice that has worked well locally and contribute towards preventing road casualties and improving road safety.

Aims and Objectives

The overall aim is to reduce the number of casualties on the roads in particular within Fife and in these vulnerable age groups.

The learning modules for each age group also have desired outcomes which are worked towards throughout the sessions.

- Pre Driver: Participants will be able to explain good and bad driving behaviour, discuss and review their experience, execute one or more simple driving manoeuvres and show appropriate driver and passenger behaviour.
- Skills for Life: Each participant will complete an evening of inputs and discussion regarding responsible driver behaviours as well as the six driving modules with a registered Advanced Driving Instructor.
- Older Drivers: Each participant will recognise safe driving practices, understand advances in motor vehicle technology, evaluate their own driving and capability.

Delivery

The way the initiative is delivered is tailored to each age group, their learning needs and areas of focus.

Pre Driver: This involves 40 S4 and S5 students from local high schools who attend the event for a day. They are transported to a suitable venue where they undergo a one day event which involves basic driving tuition provided by drivers from the emergency services or a volunteer with similar driving experience. The students also attend a number of workshops promoting safe and responsible road use facilitated by staff and volunteers from Fife Council and the emergency services. A number of workshop inputs are provided by staff and volunteers from Fife Council and the Emergency Services with the aid of virtual reality, a seatbelt convincer, a crashed car and beer goggles amongst others. This together with the driving is to instil a sense of responsible behaviour whilst using the roads.

Skills for Life: New drivers are encouraged to apply for this course. This module is coordinated by the Safer Communities Team and utilises the current Pass Plus subsidised initiative. In order to receive the discounted cost for the Pass Plus driving modules the pupil must attend an information evening. This evening consists of the Early Driver Intervention Initiative delivered by Road Policing Officers and a road safety education input delivered by Safer Communities Project Officers. The participant will then carry out the six driving modules with a registered Advanced Driving Instructor (ADI). The cost to the pupil will be £40 and the ADI will claim £90 from Fife Council.

Older Drivers: This is delivered by Fife Council Safer Communities Project Officers through an input to clubs such as Rotary Clubs, Probus Clubs, Guild Groups and similar groups across Fife. The initiative is advertised by Fife Council Safer Communities on social media and at events and groups are identified and contacted utilising the local knowledge of partner agencies.

The module consists of raising and carrying out some discussion on points appropriate to the subject, a quiz on theory and participants are also provided with a booklet with useful information as well as an up to date copy of the Highway Code. The participants are encouraged to undertake an Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) refresher drive and a number are provided free of charge to the group facilitated by IAM Roadsmart and paid for through the project. This is coordinated by Fife Council Safer Communities Project Officers.

Successes and Challenges

There is a constant challenge regarding budgets for this type of work. The current year is funded through an application to Transport Scotland with Drivewise Borders. This provided budget for the three initiatives within the budget. Sponsorship through supply of vehicles and facilities was of great benefit.

The three day event for Pre Drivers that took place in October provided hugely positive feedback from all concerned and there is an appetite for future events like this.

Due to the success of the first event, we are planning further events with all partners indicating their willingness to continue to support us including resource suppliers and staff from partner agencies.

A challenge is how to continue this successful initiative across Fife to schools who have indicated a desire to be involved. We have 18 High Schools across the region and it is a challenge to satisfy the desire in a reasonable time scale with the resources required.

Impact/Change

Drivewise Fife is being fully evaluated by an independent evaluator and all participants have been involved. These are monitored locally for results and comments which are taken into account. Initial evaluation results show a positive change in attitude regarding behaviours for road use. Comments from students and teachers have been very positive.

The initiative is directed through the Fife Road Casualty Reduction Group and this monitors what is being done and provides recommendations to how it is being delivered. Meetings are also regularly held by the Safer Communities staff and other partners to review the initiatives and processes involved.

Reflections

- As a project new to Fife, there were significant resource implications to coordinate all the aspects of the project. Now the first year is completed it is apparent that a lot of processes are in place and this should reduce this burden in future.
- Indications from all age groups are that each element is very well received and there is an appetite for more.
- Whilst this project would appear to be successful the real need for it is reiterated with every serious road collision on our roads, which have a profound impact on our communities.

Additional Information

This is only one part of the road safety work that is carried out in Fife by Safer Communities with partners. For more information see:

<https://www.fifedirect.org.uk/topics/index.cfm?fuseaction=page.display&p2sid=0C0720F7-B1FD-5EE5-CD268782202AB1EF&themeid=98A56687-9A34-4494-A43C-68E07CCA64E>

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