



13th May 2020

Everybody's experience of lockdown will indeed be different, however at RoSPA and ScORSA we are fairly certain that for most of us, in addition to the impact of social isolation, the reduction in traffic on our roads will be an abiding memory.

My daily commute is no longer necessary, and A and B-class roads and motorway driving has been reduced to just a six-mile round trip every few days to pick up necessities. My local community has really reaped the rewards of the 70 per cent reduction in car journeys. And some days I am certain that the 120 per cent increase in cycling journeys are on the roads just around here!

From children on balance bikes through to young and old alike taking advantage of the lighter traffic on roads, all are benefitting from this oasis of calm.

However as talk turns to going back to work (only in England just now), the spectre of increased vehicles on our roads looms large, especially as people are expected to heed Government advice and avoid public transport where possible.

The opportunity to build road safety back, better than it was before, is there to be grasped. There are many threads available to be developed. Some rely on whole system thinking, such as the recently-announced investment in cycling and walking infrastructure to encourage more active travel.

RoSPA and ScORSA strongly support measures that promote healthy and sustainable travel. Creating safer environments and communities that have active travel at their heart will encourage more people to see cycling and walking as a positive choice, which is good for safety, good for health and good for the environment.

We believe that meeting the needs of vulnerable road users – pedestrians, cyclists, children, older people and motorcyclists – should be a priority in local planning processes, with particular attention paid to lower speeds in built-up areas and with active travel promoted as a positive option.

As we move hopefully towards a modal shift, there is a role for each of our citizens to play in making our roads safer. For example, as a driver, adhering to the speed limit and giving cyclists as much room as you would a car when overtaking (rule 163 of the Highway Code) will make a big difference.

Parents can play their part by talking about [road safety to their children](#), using our guide as preparation for a return to school.

Weeks of home schooling have created a new normal for the youngest in our society, their interaction with traffic negligible during lockdown even in the most densely populated areas of Scotland. The road has become the space we step onto to maintain our social distance; rural roads offer an opportunity to walk with the family, as during lockdown this space has been reclaimed.

So it's vital that those of us who connect with the youngest in our society start having road safety conversations with them, re-teaching rusty skills.

To add road safety to a daily walk or home schooling session is made easier by [Ziggy](#) who helps us understand that staying safe on Scotland's roads is everyone's responsibility.