COALITION FOR HEALTHY STREETS AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

# Over 30 casualties avoided in three years with Cowley LTNs

A third year of road casualty data from the Cowley Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) in Oxford shows continuing records for low casualties, and over three years, an estimated 33 people have avoided injuries from road crashes in the LTNs and boundary roads.

Within the LTNs, casualties are well under half the pre-LTN rate, and when boundary roads are included, the reduction is more than one-third.

## Collisions in Oxford Cowley LTNs

Three new Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) were implemented in Cowley, Oxford in April 2021, adding to other LTNs in all parts of the city. Since then, every year has shown a lower level of casualties than the pre-LTN (and pre-Covid) average.

“With three years of consistent data from Police casualty reports showing far fewer injuries in both the LTNs and the boundary roads, the Cowley LTNs have saved more than 30 people from getting injured. As far as we are concerned, there is no way that anyone should be thinking about reintroducing through traffic and injuries to these quiet streets, just to save a few minutes on someone’s car journey,” said Robin Tucker, Co-Chair of CoHSAT.

These results are consistent with other studies that show that Low Traffic Neighbourhoods reduce road casualties by half or more, including a study of 72 LTNs in London[1]. The Sunak Government’s March 2024 Low Traffic Neighbourhoods Review[2] also concluded that “there is evidence that there has been less street crime and improved road safety within LTNs.”

The reductions on boundary roads appear to arise from removing collisions caused by rat-running drivers turning in and out of the residential streets. Most that remains are at non-LTN junctions.

Mr. Tucker continued, “The people how aren’t injured will probably never know. But another big benefit is the reduction in workload for the emergency services: the police, ambulance, fire and hospital emergency rooms – this all helps other people. And other road users will benefit from fewer traffic jams caused by collisions.”

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[1] Impacts of 2020 Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in London on Road Traffic Injuries | Published in Findings
[2] Low traffic neighbourhood review - GOV.UK


*A Low Traffic Neighbourhood modal filter in East Oxford*

For Oxfordshire Liveable Streets, Siobhann Mansel-Pleydel said, “There’s a worrying complacency in how we think about road injury and death as the price of getting around — yet every collision ripples through families and communities. CoHSAT’s analysis of three years of data from the Cowley LTNs shows what’s possible when we intentionally design places, from traffic movement to street layouts, around people’s wellbeing: fewer people hurt, less trauma carried by families, and safer everyday journeys for people walking, cycling, wheeling and driving. That’s the outcome we should protect and build on.”

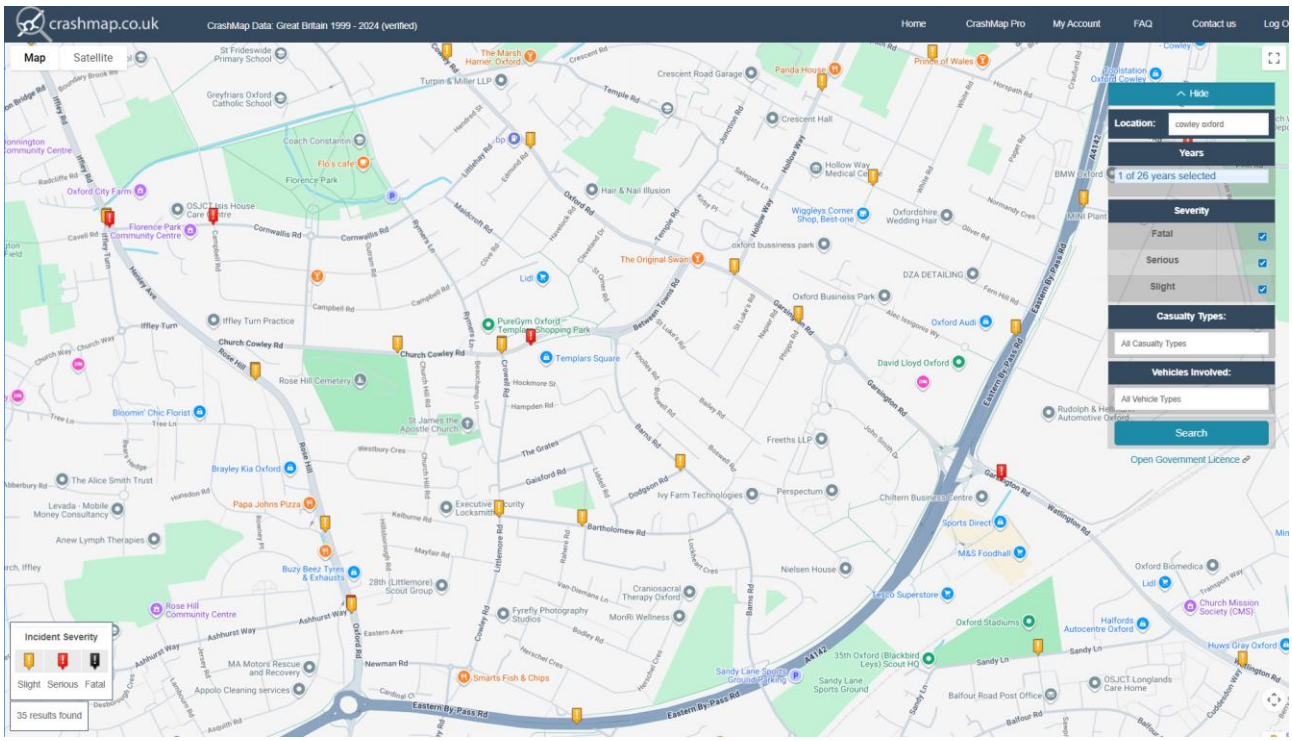
A local parent said, “Walking along Cowley Road used to be stressful with drivers turning in and out of every side street. Now Divinity Road is no longer a rat-run, I feel safe letting my older child walk to the Co-op unaccompanied.”

In addition, CoHSAT analysis shows that the March 2021 plan for three Low Traffic Neighbourhoods in Headington, which has not yet been implemented, would reduce road casualties by about 3 a year, possibly more. Hannah Kirby of Headington Liveable Streets said, "These results clearly show the injury reducing benefits of LTNs. If we applied the same benefits to Headington, we would cut the casualties in the area by 3 every year. Three families every year not having to deal with the trauma of a road violence - that is why we want to see the LTN plan for the safety benefits of removing rat-run traffic from residential streets in Headington delivered.”

## Method

Road collisions and casualties reported to the Police, are analysed through the STATS-19 process and available from the Department of Transport[3]. These include collisions that cause casualties to all types of road users: pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle occupants. 'Damage only' collisions, with no human casualties are not included in the data. Some recorded collisions had more than one casualty, but we recorded one collision.

We used a combination of DfT analytical tools, Crashmap.co.uk, and the CycleStreets 'bikedata' tool to analyse the impact of the Cowley LTNs implemented in Cowley.




*Crashmap.co.uk for the Cowley LTN area 2024. Some out-of-area points not counted are shown. Some points are hidden behind others.*

We counted the collisions in all three categories (fatal, severe and slight, although there were no fatal casualties in the area and period of study), from five years before the LTNs and before pandemic (2015-2019), and through to 2024 in each street.

The LTNs and Boundary Roads included were:

| LTNs | Boundary Roads |
|---|---|
| • Church Cowley<br>• Florence Park<br>• Church Cowley | • Henley Ave/Iffley Rd (from Newman Rd to Cornwallis Rd)<br>• Church Cowley Rd/Between Towns Rd<br>• Barns Rd (Shops at #37 to Between Towns Road)<br>• Oxford Rd (from Marsh Rd to Hollow Way) |

[3] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/reported-road-accidents-vehicles-and-casualties-tables-for-great-britain (Open Data download of Collisions used for 2022)

| | |
|---|---|
| | • Hollow Way (from Oxford Rd to Temple Rd)<br>• Newman Road (due to its traffic not its residential nature) |

2020 and much of 2021 are affected by Covid, 2021 was also the year of installation of the LTNs with part of the year without LTNs and part with, so we did not use these two years in our analysis.

The two collisions inside the LTN areas in 2024 were:

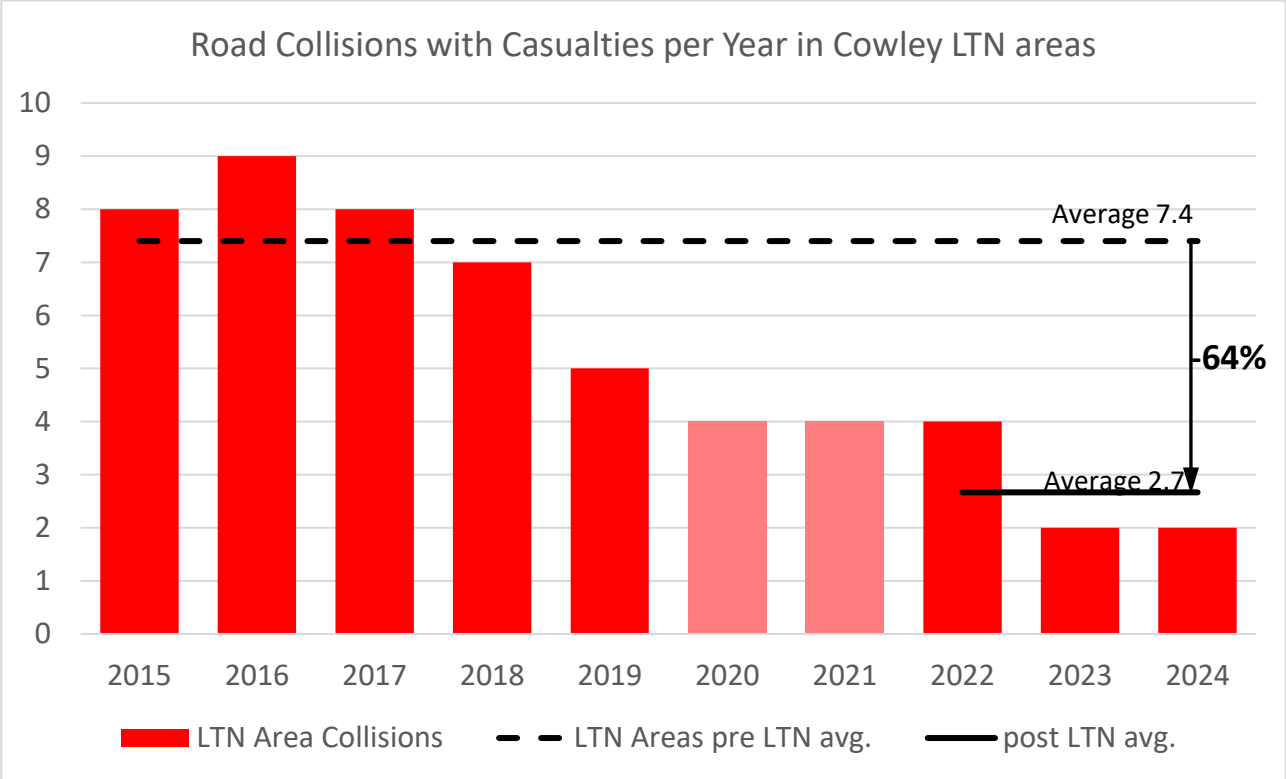
- On Bartholemew Road, on 13th August, where a bus and a cyclist collided resulting in slight injuries to the cyclist.
- On Littlemore Road, on 16th August, where a car driver slightly injured a pedestrian while reversing on the pavement.

## Results

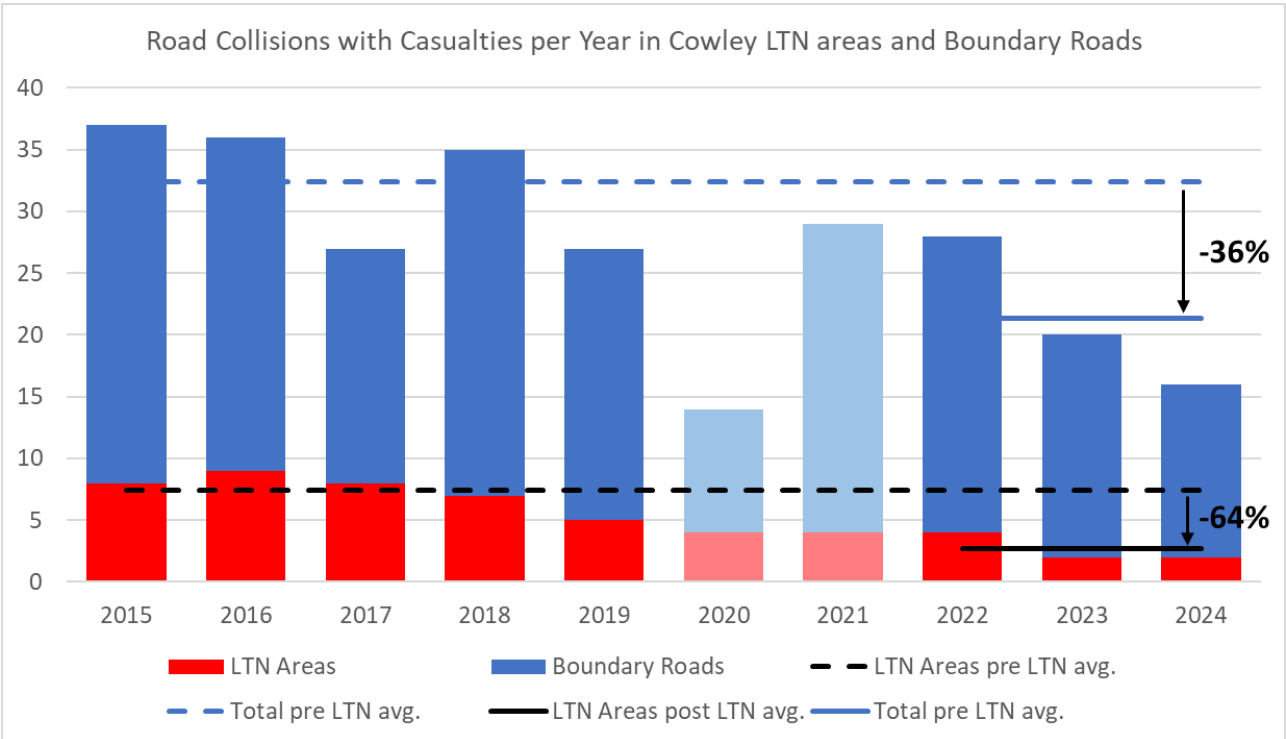
The results are in the tables below. The first table shows the basic numbers of casualties in each area and period, and the second the change between the pre-LTN and post-LTN annualised period. We used 2015-2019 as our pre-LTN and pre-Covid baseline.

| **Number of Collisions with Casualties** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** | **2018** | **2019** | **2020** | **2021** | **2022** | **2023** | **2024** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LTN Areas | 8 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Boundary Roads | 29 | 27 | 19 | 28 | 22 | 10 | 25 | 24 | 18 | 14 |

| **Number of Collisions with Casualties** | **Pre-LTN Average (2015-2019)** | **Post-LTN Average (2022-2024)** | **Change** | **Change (%)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| LTN Areas | 7.4 | 2.7 | -4.7 | -64% |
| Boundary Roads | 25.0 | 18.7 | -6.3 | -25% |
| **Total** | **32.4** | **21.3** | **-11.1** | **-34%** |




*Compared to the baseline, collisions with casualties in the LTNs were 64% lower (4.7 fewer casualties per year)*




*Compared to the baseline, collisions with casualties in the LTNs and Boundary Roads combined were 36% lower (11.1 fewer casualties per year)*

For Headington, we used the same methods and looked at casualties only within the LTN areas proposed by Oxfordshire County Council in 2021[4].

| | Collisions with Casualties in period | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Proposed LTN** | **2015-2019** | **2022-2024** | **Total (8 years)** |
| Old Headington | 8 | 6 | 14 |
| New Headington | 7 | 1 | 8 |
| Quarry | 9 | 12 | 21 |
| Total (per year) | 24 (4.8) | 19 (6.3) | 43 (5.4) |

Based on a 50-60% reduction, the Headington LTNs would reduce road casualties by about 3 per year. There would probably also be a reduction on boundary roads from reduced turning, but we have not included any benefit of this.

## Economic analysis

The Department for Transport publishes economic values for the prevention of collisions[5]. We have used these, to calculate the value of the avoided collisions. For collisions in the Cowley LTNs and Boundary Roads, before the LTNs, none were 'Fatal', 13% were Serious and 87% were slight.

| Collision type | Fraction of Collisions | Number per year | Value per Collision (RAS4001) | Value per Year (£) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Serious Casualty Collisions | 13% | 1.4 | £324,895 | £464,600 |
| Slight Casualty Collisions | 87% | 9.6 | £32,502 | £311,044 |
| | | **11** | | **£775,644** |

These values are based on estimates of medical, ambulance, police, insurance and administration costs, lost output, and damage to property. As they are based on averages and estimates, we round them below.

The economic value of the collisions and casualties avoided by the Cowley LTNs is about £750,000 per year – three-quarters of a million pounds. In the three years studied, this will have created a benefit of over two million pounds.

## Interpretation

With three years of consistent data, we can be confident that the LTNs are reducing casualties.

[4] What's happened to the Headington low-traffic neighbourhoods?, Headington Liveable Streets
[5] Road safety statistics: data tables - GOV.UK Table: RAS4001, Tab: Average_value

Much of the reduction will be related to reduction in motor traffic, down 40-50% within the LTN areas, while cycling initially increased by 22.5%[6]. The nature of motor traffic has changed as well, with cut-through traffic excluded, leaving only residential and delivery traffic.

The main collision site within the LTN areas before implementation was the junction of Rymers Lane with Cornwallis Road and Littlehay Road, with 10 casualties in the five pre-LTN years, two of them serious. Since the LTN there has not been a collision here.

On boundary roads, the results suggest a focus on junctions, in particular the junction between Iffley Road and Church Cowley Road. But with less traffic turning in and out, a trend to fewer collisions on the LTN/boundary road junctions seems to be emerging.

These results align with two main academic studies of road casualties after recent UK LTN implementations, which have also shown large reductions.

- A study of 72 London LTNs[7] found a 49% reduction in casualties, with no significant change on boundary roads.

- A longer-term analysis of Waltham Forest LTNs[8] found a 69% reduction in casualties inside the LTNs, with no significant change on boundary roads.

## Conclusions

Three years of consistent data show that the Cowley LTNs are making the streets substantially safer for people who walk, cycle and drive, reducing the human and financial cost of mobility.

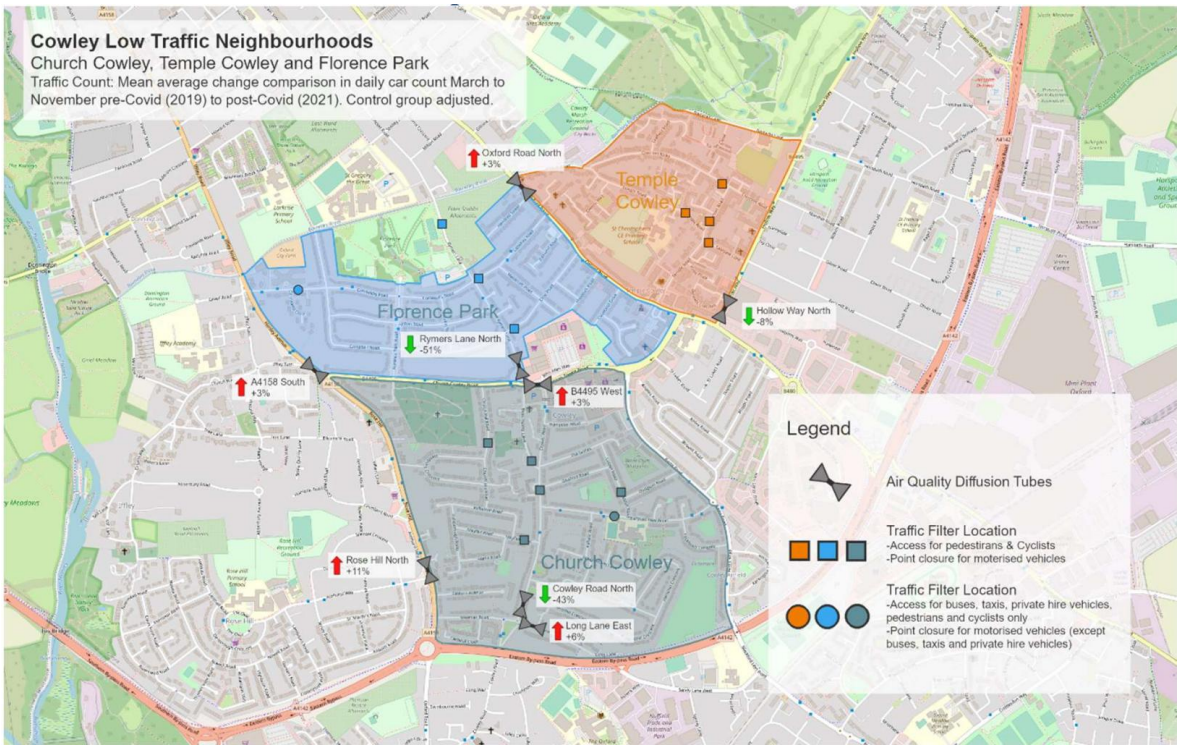
*Robin Tucker*
*Co-Chair, CoHSAT*
*16 January 2026*

[6] Oxfordshire County Council, Emergency Active Travel Tranche 1: Cowley LTN Evaluation report, Feb 2022
[7] https://findingspress.org/article/25633-impacts-of-2020-low-traffic-neighbourhoods-in-london-on-road-traffic-injuries
[8] https://findingspress.org/article/18330-the-impact-of-introducing-low-traffic-neighbourhoods-on-road-traffic-injuries.


*An LTN modal filter on Cowley Road*

## Annex A: Map of the 2021 Cowley LTNs

Source: Oxfordshire County Council, Evaluation of EATF T1 LTN Schemes Feb 2022




## Annex B: Example extract from crashmap.co.uk

2015-2019 Collisions, Orange: Slight, Red: Serious