

# News story: New road sign to improve road safety and protect animals

Areas where accident rates are highest could benefit from a new sign which warns of hazards due to animals in the road.



Hundreds of people are injured every year in collisions involving animals in the road, according to the latest Department for Transport figures.

In 2017, 629 people were injured in accidents involving an animal in the road (excluding horses) and 4 people were killed.

Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has today (17 June 2019) unveiled a new traffic sign, featuring a hedgehog, which warns road users of hazards due to animals in the road ahead and could be placed in areas where accident rates are highest.

He is calling on local authorities and animal welfare groups to identify accident and wildlife hotspots where the sign should be located.

The road sign is also designed to reverse the decline in wildlife numbers, in particular, hedgehogs whose population in rural areas has halved since 2000.

Chris Grayling said:

We have some of the safest roads in the world but we are always looking at how we can make them safer. Motorcyclists and other vulnerable road users are particularly at risk.

The new small mammal warning sign should help to reduce the number of people killed and injured, as well as helping our precious small wild mammal population to flourish.

The Transport Secretary is also meeting with road safety experts today,

including Brake, the AA and the RAC, together with animal protection groups including the Wildlife Trust, to discuss the scale of the problem.

Between 2005 and 2017, 100 people were killed, with a further 14,173 injured in accidents where an animal was in the road.

Tony Campbell, chief executive of the [Motorcycle Industry Association](#) (MCIA), said:

Powered two-wheelers provide a great solution to road congestion, but like all road users, riders must be aware of those around them.

Therefore the MCIA is pleased to welcome these new signs that will help everyone, including those on 2 wheels or 4 legs, complete their journeys more safely.

The small wildlife sign complements other warning signs already used on UK roads, filling a gap between warnings about smaller animals such as migratory toads and wildfowl, and large animals such as deer and livestock.

Jill Nelson, CEO at People's Trust for Endangered Species, said:

At PTES roadkill has long been a concern, which is why we launched our [Mammals on Roads](#) survey.

We have also joined forces with the British Hedgehog Preservation Society to deliver the Hedgehog Street campaign, meeting with Mr Grayling to express our concerns for hedgehogs on roads and elsewhere.

We welcome this focus on road safety and protection for all small mammals.

These signs will be used to warn motorists in areas where there are large concentrations of small wild animals, including squirrels, badgers, otters and hedgehogs.

The move also comes shortly before a refreshed Road Safety Statement and two-year action plan are published. These will look at further ways to reduce the number of deaths on the roads.

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