

**An Evaluation of  
Pass Plus Cymru  
On behalf of the  
Welsh Government  
March 2015**

**■ red box research**

*In association  
with  
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## Executive summary

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### I. Introduction

This research was commissioned by the Welsh Government to review the impact of Pass Plus Cymru on young driver safety; to explore whether the current programme measures up to best practice, and to assess whether the different individual elements of its programme contribute equally to its goal to reduce deaths and casualties.

The project involved extensive consultations with road safety staff in the local authorities, the emergency services, RoSPA and The Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership. The analysis draws together monitoring information gathered by administrators, supplemented by an online survey of young people. 389 young people completed the survey which provides up to date information on different aspects of Pass Plus Cymru. A comprehensive literature review was undertaken to compare the programme with best practice in other parts of the UK.

### 2. Context for the evaluation

The Road Safety Framework for Wales identifies young drivers as one of the key 'at risk' groups on the roads and sets a target for a 40% reduction in the number of young people (aged 16-24) killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads by 2020 compared with 2004/08. Statistics show that numbers are falling but that road safety amongst young drivers remains a serious issue.

Key facts are:

- A greater proportion of collision casualties in Wales are associated with young drivers than either England or Scotland.
- The proportions of collision casualties in Dyfed Powys and Gwent are higher than in any other region in GB.
- Collision rates for crashes involving young drivers in Wales are decreasing, but the reasons for this are likely to be varied and include falling birth rates, the impact of recession and a downward trend in the numbers of people holding a full license.
- In just the past five years there has been a real shift in the makeup of the young driver cohort with a 26% fall in 17-19 year olds passing their test over five years and a 39% rise in 20-25 year olds.

### 3. Pass Plus Cymru: A Strategic Analysis

In 2006, Road Safety Wales launched Pass Plus Cymru, which built on the DSA Pass Plus programme with the addition of a discussion workshop. Normally costing around £150, with a Welsh Government subsidy, the cost to the individual of Pass Plus Cymru is £20.

Since the launch of Pass Plus Cymru almost 17,000 candidates have participated in the programme. Since then, numbers have declined year on year before a reversal of the trend in 2013/14. Despite the downward trend in numbers of participants the *proportion* of novice drivers participating in Pass Plus Cymru has increased steadily and currently accounts for 6.4% of the cohort, up from 5.6% in 2009/10.

The practical element of Pass Plus Cymru follows the standard UK-wide Pass Plus model introduced in 1995. It comprises 6 modules, covering driving in town, in all weathers, on rural roads, night driving, dual carriageways and motorways. The training is intended to last at least 6 hours and in Wales it is normally delivered with pairs of young people.

As young drivers gain experience during their first 6 to 9 months of driving, research shows that their collision risk falls rapidly (by around 50%). The risk continues to fall sharply for around two and a half years, after which the rate of decline diminishes considerably. This suggests that age is less important a factor than experience in reducing crashes.

Comparison with the practical modules of Pass Plus Cymru shows that there are some direct overlaps between the Pass Plus Cymru components and the known key risk factors. It is also likely that the contributory factors are covered, to some extent, by each of the component elements. However, if Pass Plus Cymru continues, consideration should be given to mapping these risk factors more closely with the syllabus so as to better highlight and raise specific concerns with the DVSA. It should be noted that to date, no national evaluation of Pass Plus has been undertaken through its 20 year lifespan.

It is also important to note that when Pass Plus was introduced twenty years ago, driving instruction was the kind where the learner listens to the expert and tries to remember as much as he/she could. In recent years there has been a move towards 'Client Centred Learning' or coaching where the learner takes greater responsibility for his or her own learning. Research has shown that in this mode, learners are said to be more engaged and have greater input into their lessons and therefore more ownership over their learning process.

In 2011, the Scottish Executive undertook a National Debate on Young Drivers Safety. It concluded that there were specific concerns about Pass Plus and that the case for making it compulsory was weak and there is no central subsidy for it.

The additional theory session is a key element of Pass Plus Cymru comprising a two and a half hour syllabus which was developed with a view to influencing young people's attitudes and behaviours and imparting the 'Fatal 5' messages (speed, mobile phones, drink/drug driving, seatbelts and careless driving).

Combined with the practical sessions, this coverage aims to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing the disproportionate numbers of young people killed on roads in Wales. An important element of the workshop is to engage with new drivers and discuss issues that affect them. A partnership approach is taken to delivery involving the ADIs, Fire and Rescue Service and road safety officers.

The literature review identified a number of studies which have concluded that post-test training should focus on risk awareness issues, including improving knowledge, experience and recognition of dangers, rather than vehicle control. The discussion workshop would appear to follow these principles, however, it does appear to emphasise 'what' behaviours are risky rather than involve any explanation of 'why'.

In terms of the impact of Pass Plus Cymru, there has been a fall in young driver collision rates which are declining relative to drivers over the age of 25, but are still at least 5 times higher than collision rates for over 25 year olds. However, attributing cause to these changes is extremely difficult, not least because of issues with collision reporting and data completeness. Directly assessing the impact of Pass Plus Cymru is impossible because currently there is no way to link Pass Plus Cymru attendance with collision data, because the police do not collect information on Pass Plus Cymru at the scene of collisions.

Without pan-Wales data, an indirect assessment of the possible impact, using existing collision data, Pass Plus Cymru uptake data and literature on the impact of programmes such as Pass Plus Cymru, was carried out. The analysis showed that based on data from previous studies, participation in Pass Plus Cymru could have led to 11 slight crashes being avoided. The estimated total value of preventing these crashes, based on DfT data is £249,041.

Other international evidence also suggests that it is sensible to avoid unrealistic expectations about the effectiveness of driver education programmes.

Obviously Pass Plus Cymru can only impact upon the collision risk of those who participate in it; it has no impact on the collision risk of those who do not participate. Uptake of the course amongst novice drivers in Wales is low, with just 1 in 17 choosing to participate. Given the low level of participation, it is also possible that those who do undertake Pass Plus Cymru are significantly different in their attitudes to road safety than those who do not participate. This was also the conclusion of other research who believed that those who volunteer to take Pass Plus are not representative of new drivers and could represent those who recognise that they may need additional training. Furthermore it is unlikely that any programme that only reaches 6% of young drivers can have any significant impact on collision statistics.

#### **4. Pass Plus Cymru: Stakeholder and young people's views**

In stark contrast to the literature review those involved in Pass Plus Cymru either as road safety officers, administrators or beneficiaries were overwhelmingly positive about it.

In discussions with road safety officers it was noticeable that despite a common framework for the programme, it is now managed quite differently in different parts of the country with variation in the way it is promoted; the ways in which bookings are followed up; ways of paying for the course; achieved completion rates and monitoring. This in turn impacts on delivery costs which vary considerably across the country.

Although originally the grant was designed as *additional* funding, RSOs were clear that in the current economic climate, it is highly unlikely that their local authorities would be able to subsidise Pass Plus Cymru themselves.

Approved Driving Instructors (ADIs) were widely seen as the key to awareness and uptake of Pass Plus Cymru. The development of an ADI Association in Neath Port Talbot was seen as central to effective partnership working there and its potential could be explored more widely across Wales.

Asked to comment on the practical modules of Pass Plus Cymru the vast majority considered that they were comprehensive with only a few expressing concerns about the difficulty of delivering adverse weather and night time instruction at certain times of the year and the lack of ability/authority to monitor this aspect of provision.

Similarly in respect of the workshop, this was predominantly seen as a valuable and worthwhile addition. Some issues were raised about the content, format and delivery of the workshop

In the survey between 82% and 91% found different aspects of the workshop useful.

A significant gap in the evaluation data collected is the absence of core beneficiary data on the uptake of Pass Plus Cymru, so there is no way of knowing whether it reaches those at most risk. RSOs expressed some concerns in this area: *"You tend to get the more able people on courses"* but nevertheless unanimously thought that there was merit in Pass Plus Cymru being open to all young drivers.

In the absence of gender or age data an analysis was undertaken of the geographic uptake of Pass Plus Cymru. This found that in the last full financial year, greatest numbers have participated in Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Powys contrasting with lower figures in Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Caerphilly and Monmouth. As noted elsewhere, the KSI statistics for Gwent are amongst the worst in Britain yet 4 of the 5 authorities in the county have the lowest numbers participating in Pass Plus Cymru. Of course, it may be that there are fewer license holders in these areas but using test pass statistics as a proxy this shows a poor fit between KSI statistics and Pass Plus Cymru participation.

Data collected from the monitoring forms show particularly high rates of satisfaction with the programme amongst beneficiaries across Wales:

Overall, **97%** of participants believed that Pass Plus Cymru had made them a better driver. The Young People's Survey findings also provided very high levels of positive validation.

Interestingly, when asked about the numbers of crashes 13% had had a crash in the 12 months following Pass Plus Cymru. This is an identical figure to that found in the ABI evaluation undertaken in 2006. In contrast, that study reported that *non* Pass Plus drivers had a collision rate of 16% in their first 12 months of driving. As with the ABI survey it can be concluded, therefore, that Pass Plus Cymru participants have a marginally lower risk of crashing in their first 12 months, but it is not known whether the characteristics of those who participate are inherently different or whether this is evidence of success.

### **5. Conclusions and recommendations**

The research has been unable to demonstrate the impact of Pass Plus Cymru. The literature review has drawn on numerous national studies and the weight of evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of the conclusion that driver education and training has little or no direct effect on the collision risk of new drivers. If this is a key prerequisite for deciding whether or not the programme is to continue, then there is an urgent need to develop data sharing protocols with the police to allow people who have been involved in Pass Plus Cymru to be identified in KSI statistics.

In the meantime, if it is felt that the positive findings from the softer evaluation of the programme from both young drivers and RSOs is sufficient to support its continuation, then there are a number of recommendations and clear developments which can improve its effectiveness in its educational impact and reach.

# 1. Introduction

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## Introduction

- 1.1 Road crashes are the leading cause of death and injury for young people across the western world. In Wales, on average, 5 young drivers aged between 17 and 24 are killed or seriously injured each week. Currently, Pass Plus Cymru, which is subsidised by the Welsh Government, is the main road safety education measure in place designed to reduce the number of young people's deaths and casualties across the nation.
- 1.2 In launching the Road Safety Framework for Wales in 2013, with its ambitious target to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 40% amongst young people by 2020, the Welsh Government committed to evaluating Pass Plus Cymru. The purpose of the evaluation is to review the impact of Pass Plus Cymru on young driver safety; to explore whether the current programme measures up to best practice, and to assess whether the different individual elements of its programme contribute equally to its goal to reduce deaths and casualties.
- 1.3 At the time of writing, the Department for Transport's (DfT) Green Paper on young driver safety reforms has been postponed indefinitely, and it is therefore timely for the Welsh Government to take the initiative in understanding the impact of road safety initiatives it funds. This will help it clarify its strategic direction; prioritise investments; improve accountability; identify smarter ways of achieving its goals and energise staff around a clear mission and an understanding of 'what works' to achieve greater impact in the future. The current economic situation has furthered this need, with funders increasingly seeking evidence of a return on their investment.

## Method of approach

- 1.4 The approach to the evaluation has involved wide-ranging consultations with road safety experts. Road Safety staff in each authority, the emergency services and other relevant partners such as RoSPA and The Wales Road Casualty Reduction Partnership were all invited to give their views on the effectiveness of Pass Plus Cymru, its management, monitoring and delivery. Response rates were high and have provided a comprehensive overview of the programme. Administrators also provided recent monitoring information which has allowed for a pan-Wales picture of the monitoring outputs from the programme to be developed for the first time.
- 1.5 Discussions and meetings were also held with key members of Welsh Government staff to better understand the administration of the programme, as well as with other organisations which run driver training for young people.
- 1.6 An online survey of participants in Pass Plus Cymru was conducted during February and March 2015 to supplement the monitoring information available. This resulted in a high level of response from 389 young people who have been involved in Pass Plus Cymru in the past two years.
- 1.7 Finally, a literature review was undertaken, making use of latest available statistics and identifying best practice in young driver education with examples from across the UK.
- 1.8 Together, these different sources have enabled us to provide a comprehensive picture of how Pass Plus Cymru works and to assess its effectiveness in meeting its aims. Of course, one key weakness which affects any evaluation of this sort is the absence of police data on whether young people who have been involved in serious crashes have participated in Pass Plus Cymru. Without this data, assumptions have had to be made on the programme's overall impact.

## Structure of the report

1.9 The remainder of this report is structured as follows:

**Chapter 2: Context for the evaluation** – sets out key statistics on crashes amongst young people and data on trends in the numbers taking and passing their test.

**Chapter 3: Pass Plus Cymru: A strategic overview.** In this substantive chapter, the findings of the literature review are set out so as to assess the structure and content of Pass Plus Cymru against latest best practice. Data are used to identify the likely impact of the programme on collision statistics.

**Chapter 4: Pass Plus Cymru: Stakeholder and young people’s views.** Drawing on the consultations, monitoring data and the Young People’s Survey, operational aspects of Pass Plus Cymru are explored to identify effective practice and areas for improvement.

**Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations.** This final chapter brings the different threads of the study together with recommendations for future strategy.

## 2. Context for the evaluation

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### Key points

- **Wales has a higher proportion of road traffic casualties amongst young drivers (16-24 year olds) than other UK nations.**
- **Fatalities and serious injuries amongst young drivers have been falling since 2008. Amongst the youngest drivers (16-19 year olds), statistics shows that the numbers of people killed and seriously injured and total casualties have declined at a faster rate than the rest of the population.**
- **Many factors are thought to explain the decline, including falling numbers of young people, fewer taking their driving test and higher insurance premiums for young drivers.**
- **Despite these encouraging trends, in 2013 young people represented 12% of the population of Wales but had a 22% share of Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) road casualties in Wales. Between 2009-2013 a quarter of all car occupants killed or seriously injured were young car drivers.**

### Introduction

- 2.1 The Road Safety Framework for Wales identifies young drivers as one of the key 'at risk' groups on the roads and sets a target for a 40% reduction in the number of young people (aged 16-24) killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads by 2020 compared with 2004/08. This would mean 139 fewer young people killed and seriously injured over the lifetime of the Framework.
- 2.2 In this chapter we set out the key statistics relating to young driver deaths and casualties in Wales, identifying recent trends and patterns. Data on driving test passes and trends in the uptake of Pass Plus Cymru are also analysed with the aim of setting the scene for the qualitative and quantitative research with Road Safety Officers, the police, fire and rescue service, Pass Plus Cymru administrators and young people reported in later chapters.

### Key facts

#### **A greater proportion of collision casualties in Wales are associated with young drivers than either England or Scotland**

- 2.3 Road crashes remain the biggest killer of young people in the UK. In 2013, 191 people under 24 were killed and 20,003 injured as drivers and riders of cars and motorbikes.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.4 Wales is no exception to this pattern and, as with other parts of the UK and the world, collisions involving young drivers are a significant issue. In fact, recent data suggest that the problem in Wales is greater than for the rest of the UK. 16.2% of road traffic casualties in Wales between 2008 and 2012 resulted from collisions involving drivers aged between 17 and 19 years, compared with 12.5% in Scotland and 11.6% in England<sup>2</sup>. Within the Welsh regions, 18.2% of casualties in Dyfed Powys, 17.0% in Gwent, 15.8% in North Wales and 15.2% in South Wales occurred in collisions involving young drivers. **The proportions in Dyfed Powys and Gwent were higher than in any other region in GB.**

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<sup>1</sup> Dod's Monitoring as quoted on IAM website news 15/01/15

<sup>2</sup> Kinnear et al (2014)

### **Collision rates involving young drivers in Wales are decreasing, but the reasons for this are likely to be varied**

- 2.5 Between 2008 and 2010 there were, on average, around 1,000 collisions per year in which a young driver was involved (See Table 1, Appendix 1), but by 2011/13 this had dropped to around 600, a 39.2% drop. Collision rates, calculated using driver licensing data for all Wales, show that young driver collisions decreased from 22.0 to 15.9 per 1000 licensed drivers, a drop of 28.4%.
- 2.6 Young People Road Casualties in Wales data for 2014 suggests that fatalities and serious injuries in accidents involving young drivers (17-24) have continually decreased since 2008.
- 2.7 The number of young drivers, other drivers, passengers and pedestrians involved in these collisions has also decreased. Furthermore, killed and seriously injured statistics and total casualties amongst 16-19 year olds have declined at a faster rate than the rest of the population.
- 2.8 A number of factors have been put forward to explain these trends. A demographic trend of declining birth rates during the 1990s means that there are now fewer young people in the peak age group for driving tests (17-20). Moreover, population data suggests that this trend is likely to continue until late in the current decade, before reversing. Data from the National Travel Survey also show a clear downward trend in the proportion of young adults (aged 17-20) holding full licences since around 2007. The economic recession from 2008 may have discouraged some people from taking a test, but it has been suggested that this is also part of a wider, international social trend towards lower levels of licence holding amongst the young. The decrease in the number of young male adults driving has in turn been linked to changes in their socio-economic position. Changes include lower incomes, a lower proportion working full time, more city living and higher proportions living with their parents, as well as the relative rise in insurance costs for young people.
- 2.9 The economic downturn and the rise in fuel prices since 2008 are also believed to have changed driver behaviour across Britain. Driving speeds have fallen, there is less driving at over the speed limit and there has been a fall in drink driving.

### **Fewer young people are taking their driving test**

- 2.10 Whatever the reasons, the decline in the number of young people taking their driving test has been significant, with a 24% fall amongst young men and a 23% fall amongst young women. As can be seen, as the economy emerges from recession, figures for 2013/14 show the first reversal of the decline in test applications for many years.
- 2.11 Whilst absolute numbers of candidates have been falling, it is clear that those who have been taking their test have been more successful in passing it, with pass rates at their highest for many years:

	Male tests			Female tests			Total tests		
	Conducted	Passes	Pass rate (%)	Conducted	Passes	Pass rate (%)	Conducted	Passes	Pass rate (%)
2008/09	29,256	16,060	<b>54.9</b>	30,156	15,039	<b>49.9</b>	59,412	31,099	<b>52.3</b>
2009/10	25,287	14,025	<b>55.5</b>	26,139	13,306	<b>50.9</b>	51,426	27,331	<b>53.1</b>
2010/11	24,893	14,021	<b>56.3</b>	25,948	13,567	<b>52.3</b>	50,841	27,588	<b>54.3</b>
2011/12	23,809	13,606	<b>57.1</b>	26,259	13,784	<b>52.5</b>	50,068	27,390	<b>54.7</b>
2012/13	21,549	12,233	<b>56.8</b>	23,456	12,336	<b>52.6</b>	45,005	24,569	<b>54.6</b>
2013/14	22,195	12,721	<b>57.3</b>	23,175	12,217	<b>52.7</b>	45,370	24,938	<b>55.0</b>
<b>Change 2008/09 to 2013/14</b>	<b>-7061</b>	<b>-3,339</b>		<b>-6,981</b>	<b>-2,822</b>		<b>-14,042</b>	<b>-6,161</b>	

Source: DSA1203 - Practical car test pass rates by age (17-25 year olds), year

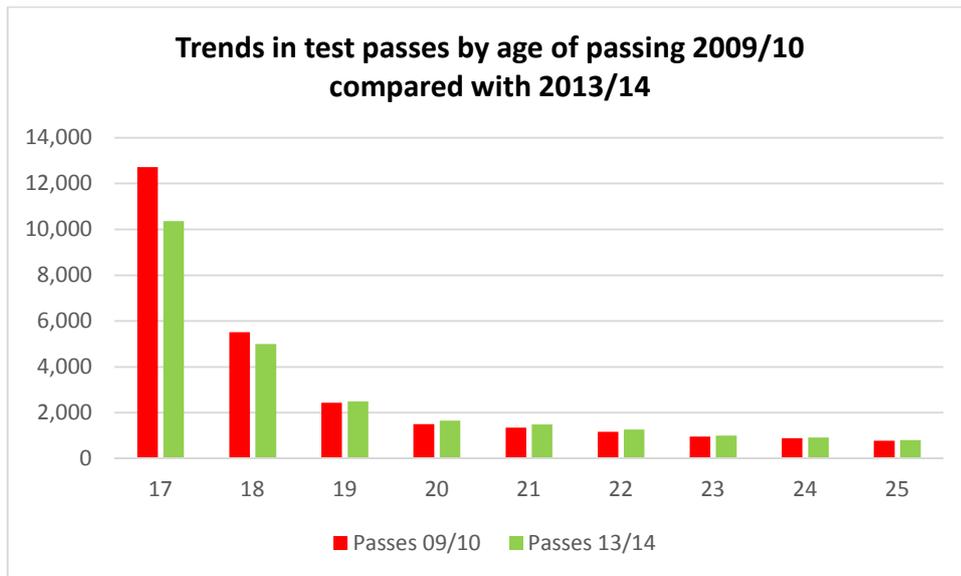
**Table 2.1: Numbers of 17-25 year olds taking and passing their test in Wales; 2008/09 – 2013/14**

### Changing demographics

**2.12** Whilst the peak age for young people to pass their test in Wales continues to be between 17 to 19 years, more detailed analysis of trends over the past five years, shows that there is a trend towards people getting older before they take/pass their test. Thus, the statistics show that:

- Almost **3,000** fewer 17 and 18 year olds passed their test in 2013/14 than in 2008/09.
- In contrast, in each age group over 18 there has been a rise in the number of test passes.

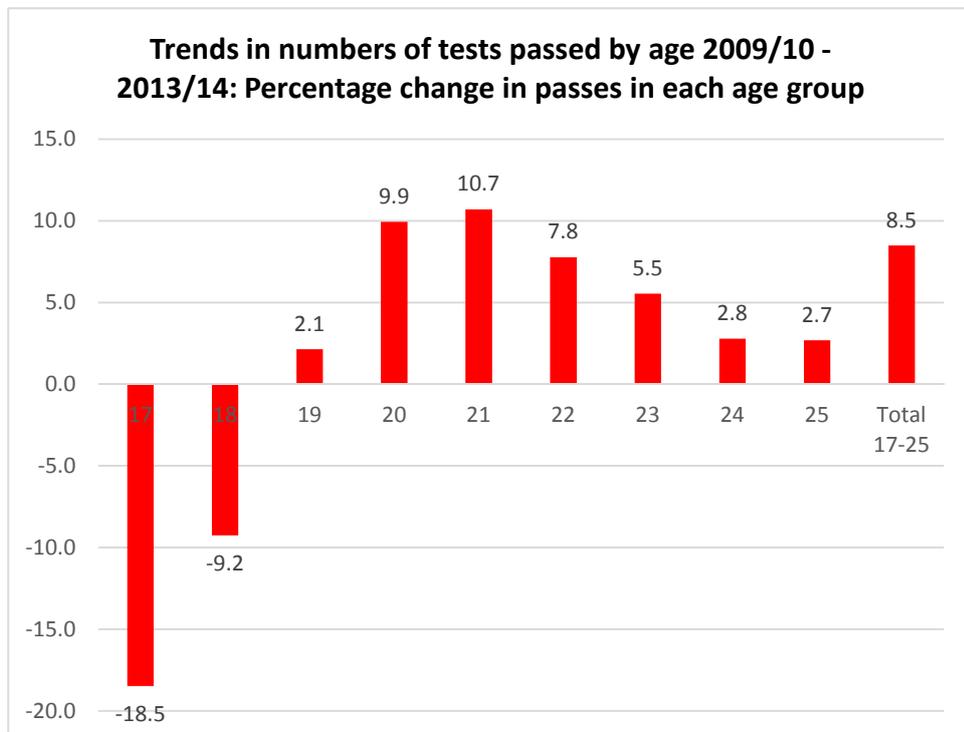
**2.13** Therefore, there are fewer young drivers in the 'at risk' group aged 17-19 than in the past and those passing their test are likely to be somewhat older drivers.



Source: DSA1203 - Practical car test pass rates by age (17-25 year olds), year

**Chart 2.1 Comparison in numbers passing their test between 2009/10 and 2013/14 by age**

2.14 An alternative analysis illustrates these shifts clearly. As can be seen, there has been an 18.5% decline in the number of 17 year old test passes, contrasting with a 10.7% rise in the number of 21 year olds passing their test. This equates to a 26% fall in 17-19 year olds passing their test over five years and a 39% rise in 20-25 year olds, contributing to a real shift in the makeup of the young driver cohort:



Source: DSA1203 - Practical car test pass rates by age (17-25 year olds), year

**Chart 2.2 Percentage change in numbers passing their test between 2009/10 and 2013/14 by age**

**2.15** Despite these overarching downward trends amongst the youngest drivers, in 2013 young people represented 12% of the population of Wales but had a 22% share of Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) road casualties in Wales. Between 2009-2013 a quarter of all car occupants killed or seriously injured were young car drivers. It is therefore vital that there continues to be measures to improve young driver safety, and the targets in the Framework help to sustain this focus.

## 3. Pass Plus Cymru: A Strategic Analysis

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### Key points

- Since its inception in 2006, just under 17,000 young people have taken Pass Plus Cymru. Currently, numbers average just over 2,000 participants per year equivalent to 6.4% of the young license holders.
- Research indicates that the collision risk of young drivers drops by around 50% during the first 6 to 9 months of driving, suggesting that age is a less important factor than experience.
- There are some direct overlaps between the Pass Plus Cymru components and the known key risk factors.
- The practical elements of Pass Plus Cymru are laid out by the DVSA, but the syllabus has not been evaluated in 20 years.
- There are difficulties in delivering some of the practical elements in particular sessions on night time driving and driving in adverse weather conditions –
- Motorway driving - whilst a popular element with young people, actually has limited potential to reduce collisions.
- In recent years there has been a move towards ‘Client Centred Learning’ or coaching where the learner takes greater responsibility for his or her own learning, which is not reflected in the design of Pass Plus.
- There is currently no effective way of assuring quality control over the practical modules.
- It is common for the practical sessions to be undertaken in one day which raises questions as to how much any young driver can take in over a single nine hour session.
- In 2011, the Scottish Executive actively considered the case for making Pass Plus compulsory for young drivers but concluded that, in its current form, the case was “weak”.
- Whilst there is a downward trend in the number of young driver collisions, in Wales they are still at least 5 times higher than collision rates for over 25 year olds.
- Directly assessing the impact of Pass Plus Cymru is impossible because there is currently no way to link Pass Plus Cymru attendance with collision data.
- Indirect assessment of the possible impact of Pass Plus Cymru suggests that 11 slight collisions may have been avoided as a result of the programme.
- Uptake of the course in Wales is low, with just 1 in 17 choosing to participate which equates to 6% of young drivers. It is considered unlikely, therefore, to have any significant impact on collisions statistics.

### Introduction

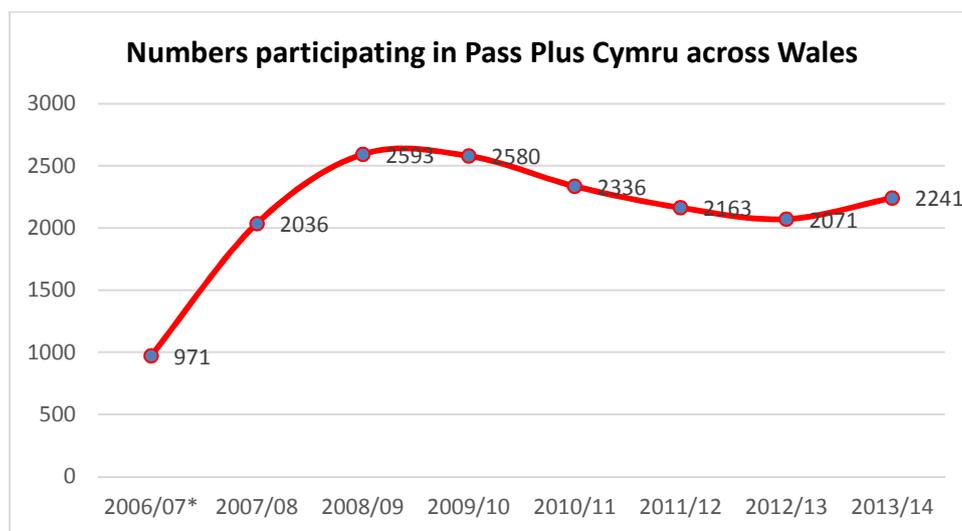
- 3.1 In this chapter, the structure and content of Pass Plus Cymru is reviewed against best practice identified from a comprehensive literature review. The impact of the programme is assessed, based on evidence from other driver programmes. Other evaluations of Pass Plus are explored with a view to identifying what the experience of Pass Plus has been in other areas of the UK.

## Pass Plus and the Pass Plus Cymru programme

- 3.2 Pass Plus is a UK-wide education programme designed for newly qualified drivers. It was launched twenty years ago by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA) with the aim of reducing young driver collision risk. In 2006, Road Safety Wales launched an enhanced version of Pass Plus called Pass Plus Cymru, which built on the DSA programme. Prior to this development, post-driver training for young people was characterised by an ad hoc approach with some local authorities offering incentives to promote take-up and others not. By delivering the programme across the whole of Wales, Pass Plus Cymru standardised delivery across the nation. Normally costing around £150, with a Welsh Government subsidy, the cost to the individual of Pass Plus Cymru is £20.
- 3.3 Pass Plus Cymru targets 17 to 25 year old novice drivers living in Wales. It has six on-road modules in common with Pass Plus (town driving, all weather driving, driving out of town, night driving, driving on dual carriageways and driving on motorways), as well as a two and a half hours workshop discussion. The workshop was put together by the Pass Plus Cymru Steering Group, based on an analysis of the issues which needed to be addressed.

## Trends in the uptake of Pass Plus Cymru

- 3.4 Since the launch of Pass Plus Cymru 16,991 candidates have participated in the programme, with numbers having peaked two years after its launch in 2008/09. Since then, numbers have declined year on year before a reversal of the trend in 2013/14.



Source: MI Welsh Government

Chart 3.1: Numbers participating in Pass Plus Cymru 2006 - 2014

- 3.5 As noted in Chapter 2, the numbers of young people taking their test have declined over the same period and analysis of uptake relative to the number of license holders shows a more positive picture. As can be seen, despite the decline in numbers of participants the *proportion* of novice drivers participating in Pass Plus Cymru has increased steadily and currently accounts for 6.4% of the cohort, up from 5.6% in 2009/10. The difference, 0.8% is statistically important:

Year	PPC attendees (All Wales)	Year	Driving licence holders aged 17 to 19 years	%
2009/10	2,580	2009	45,863	5.6%
2010/11	2,336	2010	42,052	5.6%
2011/12	2,163	2011	40,955	5.3%
2012/13	2,071	2012	38,543	5.4%
2013/14	2,241	2013	34,929	6.4%

Source: FOI request Full driving license holders by age and country

**Table 3.1: Pass Plus Cymru attendance 2009 – 2014 relative to the proportion of license holders aged 17-19**

- 3.6 In the above analysis all Pass Plus Cymru attendees are assumed to be aged 17 to 19 years, whereas a minority will be older. In addition, the Pass Plus Cymru data are for financial years while the driving licence data refers to calendar years. It is therefore possible that these differences have created some errors, however, they are likely to be minor and unlikely to create significant differences in the overall outcome and analysis. It should also be noted, that if the full age range (17-25) for which the subsidised Pass Plus Cymru is available is used, then the rate of uptake falls to just 1.5% (2013).
- 3.7 The DVSA has been unable to supply statistics to illustrate the levels of engagement in Pass Plus in England or Scotland so we are unable to compare rates of uptake by nation, nor identify what impact the subsidy has on take up rates in Wales. However, for England, Scotland and Wales combined the ratio of Pass Plus certificates<sup>3</sup> to license holders aged 17-25 in 2013 was 1%, suggesting a somewhat greater uptake in Wales than average.
- 3.8 In its review of Pass Plus in 2006 the Association of British Insurers reported that in its early days Pass Plus had an uptake amongst novice drivers (all ages) which doubled from 8% in 2000 to 16% in 2005. Since then, a fall in the numbers of insurers offering discounts, possibly reflecting the report's findings that there was no statistically significant difference in accident rates, may well have contributed to falling numbers engaged with Pass Plus.

## Driver education theory

- 3.9 A key requirement of the evaluation was to go back to first principles and consider whether the practical element of Pass Plus Cymru aligns with the most up to date evidence on what additional training new drivers need to become safer drivers and assess what impact the training has on casualty reduction.
- 3.10 Within injury prevention, interventions usually fall into one of three groups; engineering, enforcement and education. Engineering approaches are not appropriate with a specific road user group such as this and there are no 'enforcement' or legislative approaches currently in use in the UK. Therefore the main focus of efforts to address young driver safety to date has been education. In Wales, Pass Plus Cymru has been the key intervention to target young novice drivers.

<sup>3</sup> Note: This calculation makes the assumption that all Pass Plus candidates are 17-25 whereas a minority will be older drivers

**3.11** Research into driver training has led to the development of the GDE matrix, where GDE is Goals for Driver Education, a four level theory beginning with basic vehicle control, followed by mastery of traffic situations, trip related goals and personal goals and characteristics (Hatakka et al, 2001; Figure 3.1). The four levels are the ‘goals’ and these are combined with the training areas of knowledge and skill, risk increasing and self assessment. Together, they combined to form a matrix that allows driver training to be assessed to ensure that it covers all of the necessary goals (OECD, 2006). The difficulty is, within the context of Pass Plus Cymru, that an assumption needs to be made about the goals that have already been achieved. In addition, many driver training programmes are believed to cover only the lower left corner (OECD, 2006).

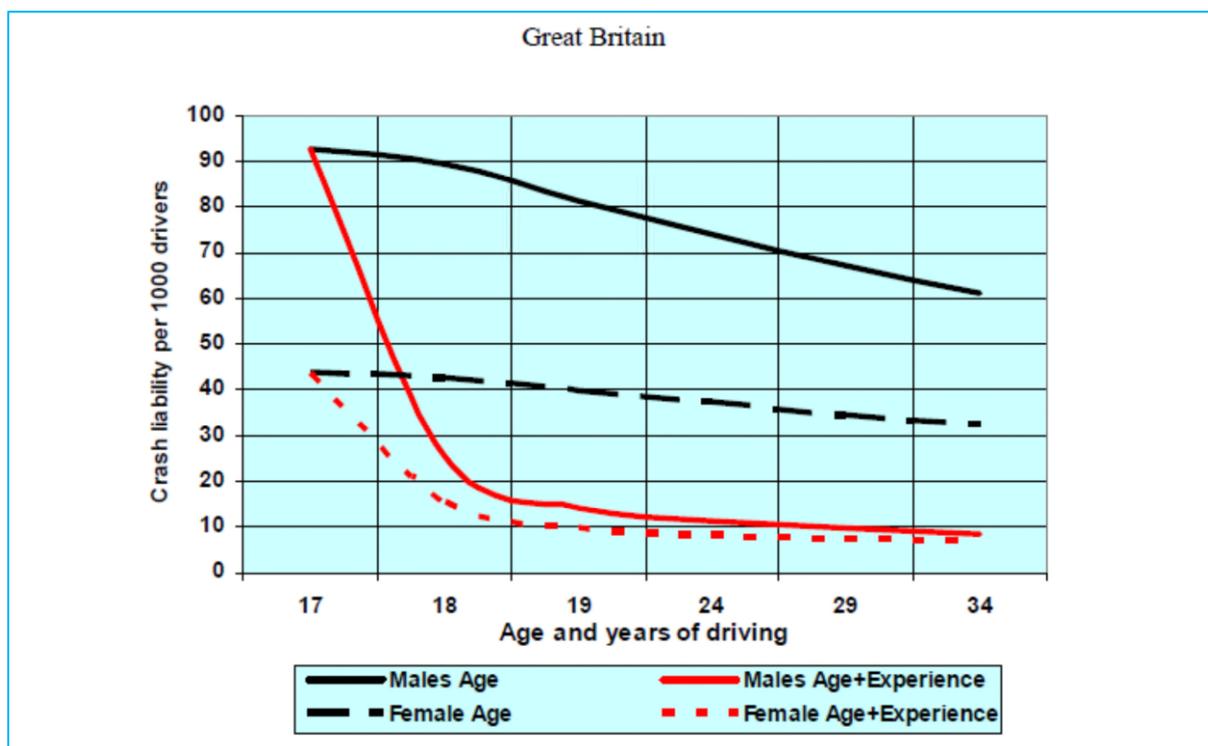
	<b>Knowledge and skill</b>	<b>Risk increasing aspects</b>	<b>Self-assessment</b>
<b>Goals for life and Skills for living</b>	Understanding the importance of lifestyle, age group, culture, social circumstances etc.	Understanding the importance of sensation-seeking, risk acceptance, group norms, peer pressure etc.	Understanding the importance of introspection, competence, personal preconditions for safe driving, impulse control etc.
<b>Goals for, and context of driving</b>	Understanding the importance of modal choice, time of day, motives for driving, route planning etc.	Understanding the impact of alcohol, fatigue, low friction, rush hour traffic, peer age passengers etc.	Understanding the importance of personal motives, self- critical thinking etc.
<b>Driving in traffic</b>	Mastering traffic rules, hazard perception etc. Automating elements of the driving process. Co-operating with other drivers etc.	Understanding the risks of disobeying the rules, close following, low friction, vulnerable road users etc.	Calibration of driving skills, developing a personal driving style etc.
<b>Vehicle control</b>	Mastering vehicle functioning, protective systems, vehicle control, etc. Understanding the impact of physical laws	Understanding risks associated with non-use of seat belts, breakdown of vehicle systems, worn out tyres etc.	Calibration of car control skills

**Figure 3.1: Goals for Driver Education Matrix**

## Pass Plus Cymru: The practical sessions

### Analysis of the structure of Pass Plus Cymru

- 3.12 The practical element of Pass Plus Cymru follows the standard UK-wide Pass Plus model introduced in 1995. It comprises 6 modules, covering driving:
- in town
  - in all weathers
  - on rural roads
  - at night
  - on dual carriageways
  - on motorways
- 3.13 It is intended that the training takes at least 6 hours. Whilst all modules should be practical sessions, local conditions, e.g. adverse weather conditions, may mean some modules are theory based. Clients would normally expect to spend at least 5.5 hours driving. There is no test on completion but the driver is assessed throughout the course. The instructor is expected to sign off the client in all of the skills covered, but there are no UK-wide data as to whether instructors ever refuse to sign off a client who have paid for a Pass Plus course; participation is of itself considered to be sufficient.
- 3.14 To achieve economies of scale and to support peer to peer learning in Wales the practical sessions are usually delivered with two students to one instructor.
- 3.15 Given that the aim of Pass Plus Cymru is to reduce the collision risk of novice drivers, the question that must be asked is whether five and a half hours is enough to reduce the collision risk and, if not, how much is enough?
- 3.16 Research indicates that collision risk of young drivers drops by around 50% during the first 6 to 9 months of driving (Sagberg, 2000; Mayhew et al, 2000). After around two and a half years of rapid decline in collision rates, the rate of decline diminishes considerably, these findings therefore suggest that **age is less important a factor than experience** in reducing collisions (Chart 3.2; Howard, 2004; OECD, 2006; VicRoads, 2005). It has also been shown that hazard perception is much quicker once 40,000km of experience has been accumulated and much slower at less than 10,000km (Ahopalo, 1987); however, improved hazard perception is only part of the reason for the decrease in collision rates that occurs as experience is accumulated (Sagberg and Bjornskau, 2006).



**Chart 3.2: Age and driving experience – collision liability among male and female novice drivers. OECD (2006), adapted from Maycock (2002)**

3.17 Therefore, do the practical sessions of Pass Plus change the accumulation of or need for experience? The six hours of Pass Plus Cymru training may represent only around 10% of the training undertaken to pass the driving test (Wells et al, 2008), but it does provide focused training in specific settings. Is it possible that the training increases the rate of progress to becoming “experienced” by 10%? It is impossible to accurately qualify or quantify these effects, but it seems unlikely that an effect any greater than 10% gain occurs and, in reality, the true effect may be considerably lower, that is assuming that there is any effect. This poses the questions as to whether the accumulation of experience of a motor task such as driving can be accelerated by any means.

**Analysis of the components of Pass Plus Cymru practical sessions**

3.18 The five key factors associated with collisions are:

- speeding
- drink driving
- failure to wear a seat belt
- drug driving
- careless driving (DfT, 2008)

3.19 Overconfidence, a lack of knowledge, understanding and attitudes, and incomplete training are additional factors for newly qualified drivers (DSA, 2009). In addition, risk perception, driving inexperience, peer pressure, driving behaviours of significant others, poor vehicle control, lifestyle and attitude factors and economic factors have also been cited as contributing to collisions (IAM, 2008; Stradling et al, 2001; Scottish Government, 2009).

**3.20** Comparison with the practical modules of Pass Plus Cymru shows that there are some direct overlaps between the Pass Plus Cymru components and the known key risk factors. It is also likely that the contributory factors are covered, to some extent, by each of the component elements. However, if Pass Plus Cymru continues, consideration should be given to mapping these risk factors more closely with the syllabus so as to better highlight and raise specific concerns with the DSA. It should be noted that to date, no national evaluation of Pass Plus has been undertaken through its 20 year lifespan.

**3.21** Before taking their practical sessions, participants are asked to identify their own needs and there is some flexibility to adapt the learning to the needs of the driver, whilst at the same time covering all aspect of the syllabus. Considering each of the elements in turn:

**Town driving**

**3.22** From a collision perspective, travelling on urban roads is where the majority of young driver collisions happen, though the collisions tend to be less serious than on rural roads, so this module may be designed to support those who may be less familiar with high traffic volumes and congestion. Whilst those who live in towns are likely to be familiar with the skills, those who do not, are unlikely to visit these towns regularly, but, between visits will accumulate significant experience that will enable them to better adapt to new or unusual circumstances.

**All weather driving**

**3.23** Driving in adverse weather conditions is a challenge for all drivers. However, depending on when the Pass Plus Cymru course is attended it may be more or less likely that adverse weather is encountered. Obviously, the ADI leading the course can discuss how to adapt to adverse weather, but this is still not the same as experience.

**3.24** There is of course, also the possibility that participants will take more risks in adverse weather following such a discussion because they believe themselves to be more competent in dealing with such conditions. This has repeatedly been found in programmes that provide skid / icy weather training which lead to an increase in collisions amongst participants (Mayhew and Simpson).

**Driving out of town**

**3.25** Rural roads are a significant risk factor for young driver collisions, therefore this as an important element of Pass Plus Cymru. It is not clear though whether this type of education, as with the skid training, may actually increase collision risk with young drivers believing that they have the skills to cope with these roads.

**Night driving**

**3.26** A high proportion of young driver collisions occur at night; around 32%, compared with 22% for other ages (OECD, 2006). In addition, one study showed that whilst 20% of young driver time was at night, 50% of their fatal collisions occurred at night (Williams, 1985). These facts have lead many jurisdictions to employ curfews for new young drivers. It has been noted that places with the lowest young driver collision rates tend to be those that impose night time curfews (OECD, 2006).

**3.27** Depending on the time of year at which a young person passes their driving test, they may have little or no experience of driving at night. A one hour session is likely to provide valuable guidance on the hazards and difficulties with night time driving, but, again, is it is uncertain that it will be sufficient to hasten the process of gaining experience to the extent that collision risk is decreased. As with adverse weather conditions, depending on the time of year in which the young person undertakes Pass Plus Cymru, the night time driving module may have to be covered verbally. Where lessons are compressed into just one session, this of course, reduces the flexibility to cover weather and night time driving modules, especially for those taking Pass Plus Cymru outside the winter months. As will be seen in Chapter 4, 20% of Pass Plus Cymru participants did not have this crucial practical element.

### **Driving on dual carriageways and driving on motorways**

**3.28** Motorways are often highlighted by politicians and policy makers who believe that the driving test should include these components. However, access to motorways is very limited for new drivers in many parts of Wales, though some young people will be moving to university where motorway driving is more commonplace. But, more importantly, collision risk of all drivers is very low on motorways because of the homogeneity of traffic, speed, and travel direction and the lack of pedestrians and cyclists. This is also true of young drivers; collision data for Wales for 2008 to 2013 indicate that just 1.4% of young driver collisions occur on motorways, compared with 2.9% of older drivers (Table 3.2). In addition, 10.3% of young driver collisions occur on dual carriageways, compared with 13.7% of older driver collisions. Based on the collision data, it is difficult to justify such a focus on motorways and dual carriageways, despite the motorway element being a key draw for young people.

Road class	Total	Young drivers		Older drivers	
		n	%	n	%
Motorway / A(M)	743	50	1.4%	693	2.9%
A	12165	1505	43.3%	10660	44.1%
B	3814	584	16.8%	3230	13.4%
C	295	59	1.7%	236	1.0%
Unclassified	10637	1278	36.8%	9359	38.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27654</b>	<b>3476</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>24178</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

Table 3.2:- Young driver and older driver collisions by road class

Road type	Total	Young drivers		Older drivers	
		n	%	n	%
Roundabout	1955	217	6.2%	1738	7.2%
One way	647	55	1.6%	592	2.4%
Dual C'Way	3680	357	10.3%	3323	13.7%
Single C'Way	20712	2779	79.9%	17933	74.2%
Slip Road	286	24	0.7%	262	1.1%
Unknown	374	44	1.3%	330	1.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>27654</b>	<b>3476</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>24178</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

Table 3.3:- Young driver and older driver collisions by road type

### Timing of post test training

- 3.29 Driving behaviour during the first six months has also been found to be important; better driving behaviours have been associated with longer survival times, suggesting that post-test training and testing should be carried out as soon as possible after passing the test (Atkins, 2011). This has been the experience of Pass Plus Cymru with most participants taking part immediately after their test.

### The delivery of post test training

- 3.30 It is important to note that the practical elements of Pass Plus were introduced twenty years ago at a time when all driving instruction was the kind where the learner listens to the expert and tries to remember as much as he/she could. In recent years there has been a move towards 'Client Centred Learning' or coaching where the learner takes greater responsibility for his or her own learning.
- 3.31 Client Centred Learning takes into account how the individual prefers to learn. A strategy is then constructed in order to help them with the learning process which will ultimately enable learners to take responsibility for their learning at an early stage. Research has shown that in this mode, learners are said to be more engaged and have greater input into their lessons and therefore have more ownership over their learning process. The enhanced communication gives ADIs more insight into what their learners truly understand, and this enables ADIs to know, much more precisely, why learners were making mistakes and those areas on which their learners still needed to work.

- 3.32 Approved Driving Instructors may already adopt this approach, but one of the limitations of Pass Plus Cymru is that there is no effective way of assuring quality control over the practical modules.
- 3.33 Another issue is that Pass Plus was originally designed as six individual modules but under Pass Plus Cymru more commonly the 6 modules are fitted into 4.5 hours per driver with two people to a car. Whilst the practical reasons for this are understood – distance from the motorway/accessibility of different road types etc - it must be questioned whether a young person can really continue to genuinely concentrate and learn over one 9 hour long day, when pre-test they most commonly will have been in the car for an hour's driving lesson.

### Wider views on the practical modules of Pass Plus

- 3.34 In 2011, the Scottish Executive undertook a National Debate on Young Drivers Safety which provides much useful information on the subject. One of the recommendations was to ensure that road safety education and awareness interventions are based on scientific theory and evidence of effectiveness, and represent good value for money (Atkins, 2011). It also called for the evaluation of the effectiveness of undertaking post-test training, along with investigation of the effectiveness of accreditations for post-test training and to consider whether financial incentives are effective in persuading young drivers to take up evaluated post-test training (Atkins, 2011). None of these evaluations have yet taken place. The Debate was initiated following previous qualitative work by the Scottish Executive which found that young people were open to gaining more experience after passing their driving test through participation in a scheme such as Pass Plus (ODS Consulting, 2008).
- 3.35 However, after consideration of all views it was reported that *“specific concerns were raised about the effectiveness of Pass Plus. Road safety stakeholders commented that it is often delivered in one day rather than over an extended period, focuses on how rather than why, can be treated as a ‘tick box’ exercise, and has not been subject to any formal evaluation. Young people also queried the quality of tuition provided and questioned the financial benefits in terms of reduced premiums. The case for making Pass Plus compulsory in its current form is therefore weak.”*
- 3.36 These concerns have also been reflected in other developments. For instance, in Buckinghamshire, the Council took a decision to replace a subsidy for Pass Plus with a new course (Get in Gear) because Pass Plus tuition was seen as outdated and not in line with the more up to date approach to client centred learning. Coupled with dissatisfaction with the lack of any examination; and concerns over the quality of tuition the Council introduced a new practical session (accompanied by a theory workshop) to enable young drivers to critically analyse their own driving ability. The 2 x 2 hour sessions included routes on road types where the young people were most likely to be involved in collisions (rural roads, faster roads and urban driving). Participating ADIs were trained by a Police Class 1 driver to ensure consistent standards and undertook a one day training course on self-evaluation. The scheme is targeted at drivers who have recently passed their driving test and who are under the age of 25. Approximately 630 drivers have completed the course since its commencement in September 2008. An evaluation of Get in Gear showed positive outcomes although one particular difficulty the project has faced is in attracting the insurance discounts which appeal to young drivers. Currently no funding is available to continue the programme.
- 3.37 In the same vein, the Institute of Advanced Motorists has introduced Skill for Life as an alternative to Pass Plus. Skill for Life cannot be delivered in one day and is intended to start the candidate on the path to lifelong improvement. Nevertheless, as with all post-driver education, whether it can be proven to have a measurable impact on collision rates is debateable.

## Pass Plus Cymru: The theory workshop

- 3.38 The theory session is a key element of Pass Plus Cymru comprising a two and a half hour syllabus which was developed with a view to influencing young people's attitudes and behaviours and imparting the 'Fatal 5' messages (speeding, alcohol, drugs, seatbelts and mobile phones). The workshop was put together by the (then) Pass Plus Cymru Steering Group and the syllabus has evolved throughout the lifetime of Pass Plus Cymru.
- 3.39 Current oversight of Pass Plus Cymru rests with the Young People's Steering Group which discusses development and content issues as they arise; Pass Plus Cymru is a standing item on the Road Safety Wales Policy and Executive Group meetings. All partners are encouraged to feed into the process and bring in new suggestions. The workshop is expected to be delivered to the standardised All Wales syllabus which includes a core element of key messages along with the use of the 'Cow DVD' – a film produced by Gwent Police in 2009 about a girl who kills four people on the road whilst using her mobile phone.
- 3.40 The topics covered in the workshop include:
- Positive driver attitudes and behaviours
  - Hazard awareness
  - Thinking and planning ahead
  - Wearing seat belts
  - Use of mobile phones
  - Drinking and/or drug driving
  - Inappropriate use of speed
- 3.41 Combined with the practical sessions, this coverage aims to provide a comprehensive approach to addressing the disproportionate numbers of young people killed on roads in Wales. An important element of the workshop is to engage with new drivers and discuss issues that affect them. A partnership approach is taken to delivery involving the ADIs, Fire and Rescue Service and road safety officers.
- 3.42 The literature review identified a number of reports<sup>4</sup> that indicate that post-licence training can have both positive and negative effects on driver safety. Negative effects can occur when training focuses on vehicle control skills such as skidding, possibly because young drivers become over-confident about their ability to handle a car in dangerous conditions, which they would previously have avoided. As a result, a number of studies (e.g. Keskinen et al., 1992; Gregersen, 1996; and Engstrom et al., 2003) have concluded that post-test training should focus on risk awareness issues, including improving knowledge, experience and recognition of dangers, rather than vehicle control. The discussion workshop would appear to follow these principles.
- 3.43 However, a comparison of the syllabus with the GDE matrix (Fig 3.1) suggests that the course may well simply address the bottom left of the GDE matrix, focussing on knowledge and skills of vehicle control and driving in traffic, with the possibility of reaching some of the risk increasing aspects. In terms of alcohol, for example - understanding the impact of alcohol would be a level 3 (goals for and context of driving; risk increasing aspect) goal, but the course as presented, appears to be far more along the lines of conveying the rules, rather than containing an explanation of why different factors actually increase risk.

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<sup>4</sup> OECD / ECMT (2006). Young Drivers – the road to safety. Paris. OECD.

- 3.44 Interestingly, an evaluation of an enhanced Pass Plus scheme (involving a workshop) in North Yorkshire sought to evaluate the effect of the workshop over the standard Pass Plus by comparing attitudes of drivers who had experienced one or the other. It found that the enhanced Pass Plus was successful in enabling drivers to assess the risks they face when making a journey and in improving their ability to identify ways of mediating and reducing risks. Drivers who completed the enhanced version were able to identify significantly more risks and suggest significantly more strategies to reduce their risk than drivers who completed the standard Pass Plus scheme, based on the driving scenario presented in the evaluation survey. While participants in both groups were able to identify a broad range of risk and risk reduction strategies, drivers who completed the workshop cited peer pressure to drink or speed as a risk more frequently than drivers who had done just the practical modules. The evaluation concluded that the workshop had been successful in “raising drivers’ awareness of specific risks associated with driving, and what they can do to mitigate them has been effective”<sup>5</sup>

### The impact of Pass Plus Cymru

- 3.45 It was noted in Chapter 2 that there has been a significant fall in the number of young driver collisions in Wales over recent years. However, care must be taken when interpreting the reasons for the decreasing numbers and rates and it is also important to account for the changes to other age groups. In effect, the change in young driver collisions and collision rates is the percentage change for young drivers less the percentage change for over 25 year olds; this calculation gives a measure of the change for young drivers over and above that of the ‘rest’ of the driving population. Therefore, the total number of collisions involving young drivers has dropped by 28.2%, which is 16.2% greater than the effect on over 25 year olds.
- 3.46 Calculation of rate ratios gives a measure of changes in rates in one group relative to another group. In this case, young drivers killed and seriously injured (KSI) rates have gone from being 6.5 times higher than those of over 25 year olds in 2008-10, to 4.9 times higher in 2011-13. Whilst this appears to be a positive change, statistical confidence intervals mean that the change from 6.5 to 4.9 is not regarded as being statistically significant.
- 3.47 For the ‘slight’ and ‘all crashes’, however, there has been a statistically important change in the rate ratios, with young drivers’ slight crashes dropping from 8.7 to 7.3 times higher than 25+ year slight crashes and all crashes dropping from 8.4 to 6.8 times higher.
- 3.48 Thus, the key point from this analysis is that **young driver collision rates are declining relative to drivers over the age of 25, but are still at least 5 times higher than collision rates for over 25 year olds. If the targets of the Road Safety Framework are to be met, it is essential that there continues to be action to address the issues of young driver safety across Wales.**

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<sup>5</sup> Hawksley R, and Finon F. (2011) Evaluation of North Yorkshire County Council’s Enhanced Pass Plus Scheme

	Year	Numbers			Rates			Rate ratios v 25+ yr driver (95%CI)		
		KSI	Slight	All Crashes	KSI	Slight	All Crashes	KSI	Slight	All Crashes
17 to 19 yr drivers	2008-10	120	879	999	2.7	19.6	22.2	6.5 (5.38 to 7.91)	8.7 (8.12 to 9.40)	8.4 (7.84 to 8.99)
	2009-11	102	729	831	2.4	17.0	19.3	5.9 (4.80 to 7.26)	8.0 (7.43 to 8.71)	7.7 (7.16 to 8.29)
	2010-12	84	605	689	2.1	14.9	17.0	5.4 (4.29 to 6.74)	7.5 (6.87 to 8.16)	7.1 (6.60 to 7.74)
	2011-13	75	533	608	2.0	14.0	15.9	4.9 (3.85 to 6.19)	7.3 (6.63 to 7.95)	6.8 (6.29 to 7.45)
	% change v 2008-10	-37.8%	-39.3%	-39.2%	-	-	-			
20 to 24 yr drivers	2008-10	208	1261	1469	1.5	9.2	10.7	3.7 (3.17 to 4.31)	4.1 (3.85 to 4.37)	4.0 (3.81 to 4.28)
	2009-11	194	1175	1369	1.4	8.6	10.0	3.5 (3.02 to 4.13)	4.1 (3.80 to 4.33)	4.0 (3.74 to 4.22)
	2010-12	182	1126	1307	1.3	8.3	9.6	3.5 (2.95 to 4.09)	4.1 (3.88 to 4.43)	4.0 (3.80 to 4.29)
	2011-13	187	1047	1233	1.4	8.0	9.4	3.6 (3.02 to 4.17)	4.1 (3.87 to 4.45)	4.0 (3.80 to 4.31)
	% change v 2008-10	-10.1%	-17.0%	-16.0%	-5.8%	-	-			
25+ yr drivers	2008-10	740	4046	4786	0.4	2.2	2.6			
	2009-11	735	3868	4603	0.4	2.1	2.5			
	2010-12	714	3708	4422	0.4	2.0	2.4			
	2011-13	735	3524	4259	0.4	1.9	2.3			
	% change v 2008-10	-0.7%	-12.9%	-11.0%	-2.0%	-	-			

Source:- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

**Table 3.4:- Annual rolling average crashes and crash rates (per 1000 licensed drivers) for 17 to 19 year olds, 20 to 24 year olds and 25+ year olds.**

- 3.49** Attributing cause to these changes is extremely difficult, not least because of issues with collision reporting and data completeness. Directly assessing the impact of Pass Plus Cymru is impossible because there is no way to link Pass Plus Cymru attendance with collision data. However, close partnership working in some parts of Wales has enabled some local authorities to obtain informal, relevant data and in order to accurately assess the impact of Pass Plus Cymru and the potential to expand this approach across Wales should be explored. The extent and outcomes from this data has not been systematically explored in this research but appears to show a mixed picture.
- 3.50** Without pan-Wales data, an indirect assessment of the possible impact, using existing collision data, Pass Plus Cymru uptake data and literature on the impact of programmes such as Pass Plus Cymru, was carried out.
- 3.51** A review of driver education programmes has found that in a trial of advanced driver education, the relative risk of injury after participating in the programme was 0.94 (95% CI 0.74 to 1.20), meaning that there was a 6% decrease in collisions associated with the programme (Ker et al, 2008). This is described as the ‘best estimate’ or point estimate of effect; the confidence intervals give an indication of the precision of this estimate and also a range of values within which the true effect on collisions would lie on 95% of occasions. Therefore, the effect of the education programme on collisions could be as great as a 26% decrease in collisions or a 20% increase in collisions. This was based on a Swedish programme in which 1640 drivers aged 18 to 24 years old agreed to participate. The programme was group driver education in the form of full and half day courses.
- 3.52** Obviously, 6% is a very small effect, but this is consistent with the ABI report into the effect of Pass Plus on driving safety, which reports that Pass Plus drivers do have a marginally lower accident rate, of around 5%, than drivers who do not participate in the scheme (ABI, 2006).
- 3.53** Therefore, assuming that the effect of Pass Plus Cymru on collisions is 6%, this change in collision rates can be applied to Pass Plus Cymru participants. However, it is only possible to estimate the effect based on the collision rate for all drivers. Attendance data were only available for 2009 onwards, so the analysis covers five years between 2009 and 2013.
- 3.54** The annual collision numbers and rates for 17 to 19 year olds are shown in Table 3.5:

	Numbers			Rates		
	Total	KSI	Slight	Total	KSI	Slight
2009	1027	124	903	22.4	2.7	19.7
2010	723	81	642	17.2	1.9	15.3
2011	743	100	643	18.1	2.4	15.7
2012	600	70	530	15.6	1.8	13.8
2013	480	54	426	13.7	1.5	12.2

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

**Table 3.5:- Annual collision numbers and rates per 000 licensed drivers for 17 to 19 year olds, Wales**

3.55 Based on the data from Ker et al (2008), it is assumed that the numbers of collisions in the Pass Plus Cymru group are actually 6% lower than they would be expected to be (Table 3.6).

	Collisions occurred						Collisions avoided			Value of avoided collisions
	Non PPC			PPC			All	KSI	Slight	
	All	KSI	Slight	All	KSI	Slight				
2009	969	117	852	58	7	51	3	0	3	£64,110
2010	683	77	606	40	4	36	2	0	2	£44,897
2011	704	95	609	39	5	34	2	0	2	£46,273
2012	568	66	502	32	3	28	2	0	2	£46,672
2013	449	51	399	31	3	27	2	0	2	£47,089

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>

**Table 3.6:- Estimated annual numbers of collisions for 17 to 19 year olds, participating and not-participating in Pass Plus Cymru.**

3.56 The small numbers mean that rounding errors are an issue, but, it is estimated that, in 2009, 3 slight collisions were avoided as a result of participation in Pass Plus Cymru, and 2 in each of 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 (Table 3.6 above). The estimated total value of preventing these collisions, based on DfT data<sup>6</sup> was £249,041.

**3.57 Therefore, based on data from previous studies, participation in Pass Plus Cymru could have led to 11 slight collisions being avoided.**

### Other evaluations

3.58 Post licence driver education is a popular approach to reducing road traffic collisions, but the effectiveness of it is yet to be proven (Ker et al, 2008). To try to address this, a Cochrane Collaboration Systematic Review has been carried out. The aim of such a systematic review is to seek to bring together all of the existing evidence on a specific topic and consider it as a whole to draw a more robust conclusion. Cochrane reviews are regarded as the gold standard for systematic reviews.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/244913/rrcgb2012-02.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244913/rrcgb2012-02.pdf)  
Table RAS60001

**3.59** The Cochrane Review looked for randomised controlled trials comparing post licence education with no education, measured using outcomes including traffic collisions and injury collisions (Ker et al, 2008). Of the 24 trials that were identified, 23 related to remedial driver education and only one to advanced post licence education; the overall effect of these programmes on injury collisions was to increase risk by 12%. When only the advanced driver education programme was considered in terms of the effect on injury collisions, it was found to reduce risk by 6%. (Ker et al, 2008). The authors concluded that the review provides no evidence that post licence driver education is effective in preventing road traffic injuries or collisions (Ker et al, 2008). Given that there are few recent studies, that most of the identified studies were of remedial education and only one was conducted outside the USA, it is difficult to generalise these findings to existing UK programmes. However, in light of this evidence, it is sensible to avoid unrealistic expectations about the effectiveness of driver education (Ker et al, 2008). In addition, programmes that are implemented need robust evaluation, based on objective analyses of collisions and injuries. Obviously, one of the main reasons for the lack of research in this area is the difficulty with carrying out a robust evaluation.

### Previous evaluations of Pass Plus / Pass Plus Cymru

**3.60** An ABI review of Pass Plus (ABI, 2006) found that Pass Plus drivers have a marginally lower accident rate than non-participants (around 5%), but concluded that additional measures will be needed if there are to be significant reductions in deaths and injuries amongst young drivers.

**3.61** The RoSPA evaluation of Pass Plus Cymru concluded that the scheme offers considerable benefits to participants, but that it may also only attract drivers who are already more safety conscious (RoSPA, 2010). It concluded that a more substantial evaluation was required.

**3.62** In Scotland, the National Debate on Young Drivers' Safety (Atkins, 2011) included elements on post-test training, specifically including Pass Plus. Stakeholders were reported to have raised the following concerns about Pass Plus:-

- Many Approved Driving Instructors deliver the six hours of training in one day, rather than over an extended period
- There has been no formal nationwide evaluation of the scheme
- The numbers participating in the scheme are decreasing
- The tuition does not explain why a driver should approach a situation in a certain way
- The scheme is seen by many young people as a route to lower insurance or getting parents 'on side', rather than as a way to becoming a better driver
- The cost deters most young people and the current economic climate makes it difficult to offer subsidies
- The scheme, or any other similar scheme, needs to be quality assured, subjected to a full and published evaluation and marketed more effectively.

**3.63** Obviously, Pass Plus is different to Pass Plus Cymru and the bullet point relating to cost is not relevant, but it is difficult to argue, based on the differences between Pass Plus and Pass Plus Cymru, that these points are not pertinent to Pass Plus Cymru as well.

**3.64** Enhanced Pass Plus schemes that, like Pass Plus Cymru, offer a discussion group are operating in Kirklees, Staffordshire, North Yorkshire and, it is likely, other areas too. In Staffordshire, attendance at a workshop covering peer pressure, seat belt use and drink and drug driving attracts a discount on Pass Plus to £60.

- 3.65** The Kirklees scheme began in 2004. Participants must have held their driving licence for a maximum of 10 months, but can be of any age (Lang et al, 2009). The scheme costs £56, involves 8 hours of training plus a 2 hour discussion group covering factors that affect driving performance, improving novice driver ability to analyse near misses and self-evaluate, improving attitudes towards driving, speed awareness and blockers (distraction, peer pressure, night driving, alcohol, fatigue; Lang et al, 2009). The structure of the discussion group is based on the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1988), the Task-Capability-Interface model (Fuller, 2000) and work carried out at Loughborough University on driver fatigue. In an evaluation, participants were asked to self-report collisions for 3 months post participation; 6% of enhanced scheme participants crashed compared with 23% of 'standard' Pass Plus participants. Kirklees is in West Yorkshire, where the proportion of collisions involving young drivers was 10.2%, somewhat below the English average of 11.2% (Kinnear et al, 2014); however with the Kirklees population (422,500) being only around 20% of the total population of West Yorkshire (2.16m), it seems unlikely that Pass Plus has had a significant effect on the collision rate there.
- 3.66** Elliot (2006) attempted to use Cohort II data to analyse the effectiveness of Pass Plus, using self-report crash data. It was concluded that there was no difference between Pass Plus participants and non-participants in crash rates (Elliot, 2006). Interpreting the outcome data is, however, difficult, not least because of the self-report nature of the findings. There do not appear to be any police collision data based evaluations of any of the Pass Plus schemes, enhanced or otherwise.
- 3.67** Atkins (2011) stated that one of the difficulties with schemes such as these was that they would always need to remain voluntary because of the practicalities of accessing the full range of road conditions, particularly in rural areas. They did, however, find that many young people were amenable to undertaking post-test training, providing that the cost was low and that financial benefits, in terms of reduced insurance premiums, exist (Atkins, 2011). Given that Pass Plus Cymru is already subsidised and available at a low cost, the relatively low level of uptake is likely to be linked to the lack of reduced insurance premiums. For insurers to substantially reduce premiums, they need to be sure that an intervention will have a significant impact on collision rates. However, the evaluation carried out by the ABI showed only a marginal impact (ABI, 2006) and the concern was raised that the scheme only attracted those who were already safer drivers (S Pendry, personal communication). This has meant that while some insurers will apply a discount for Pass Plus, others will not and, of those that do, it is only a 'token gesture' and not sufficiently attractive to large numbers of young people (e.g. Churchill offers 5%) (S Pendry, personal communication).
- 3.68** Although in interview some RSOs believed that the discounts could be substantial, the government website, Directgov, lists just 13 insurers as offering insurance benefits to those who have completed the Pass Plus course. This compares with 125 providers used by the comparison site Confused.com. The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM) also offers an advanced driving course, but says their emphasis is on the value of the training, not any additional insurance cost cutting benefits.
- 3.69** Neil Greig, Director of policy and research at IAM, reports: *"The problem with offering incentives for advanced driver training courses is that there are never enough hard statistics for the big insurers to get on-board. Insurers ideally want to see years of data proving that drivers who took a particular course, such as the Pass Plus, have fewer accidents. They would then be able to offer discounts based on the facts that drivers with this particular driver training are a safer risk. So no-one has done this research, which is why so few insurers offer a Pass Plus discount."*

- 3.70** The IAM has struck deals with certain insurers to offer discounted rates to drivers who pass the organisation's Skill for Life course. But the IAM adds that they too have trouble getting the bigger insurers on board.
- 3.71** Young people did question whether Pass Plus could reduce insurance premiums in the Scottish Debate, along with whether it could improve driving standards (Atkins, 2011). Their concerns related to the quality of instructors, that some candidates had received certificates without completing the course, that, in some cases, three modules had been completed in one night and that the value of this was questionable. A number of respondents had decided not to undertake Pass Plus because of the lack of significant financial benefit. Young people also stated that uptake would be encouraged if there was a significant reduction in driving costs, but that it would not necessarily prevent reckless driving behaviour (Atkins, 2011).
- 3.72** The experience in Buckinghamshire is instructive. The Council had been running a Pass Plus course between 2005 and 2009, but found it very difficult to evaluate or manage because of factors outside their control. They found that the ADIs were not consistent in their ability or delivery. They also found that some students admitted that the instructor had only delivered the motorway driving as everything else had been covered in their pre-test lessons. This suggested to the Council that some ADIs placed little value on post driver training and potentially lacked the skills to advance new driver skills or the experience of key risk areas.
- 3.73** An initial evaluation of their replacement Get in Gear scheme found evidence that compared to pre-course, immediately post course participants were significantly ( $p < .05$ )
- more likely to associate driving with risk and responsibility than freedom and pleasure
  - more likely to indicate that attitudes to safe driving are more important than vehicle skills
- 3.74** A second evaluation focused on the ability of a driver to critically analyse a video clip as if they were the driver. The evaluation found a number of improvements. All the mean scores for all the items moved in the desired direction with a significant improvement being found in relation to speed. The speed finding was very positive, as speed is often cited as an issue associated with the collision involvement of novice drivers. These results were aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the GiG course. However, the authors acknowledge that without a control group it was difficult to be confident as to whether test results were naturally occurring or as a result of the training.
- 3.75** Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership run a Safe Young Driver Initiative which like Pass Plus Cymru comprises a theory session as well as Pass Plus. They undertook an evaluation using a control group which showed that those who had undertaken the post driver training had an incident rate of 1:15 compared with a control group where the rate was 1:4.
- 3.76** Obviously Pass Plus Cymru can only impact upon the collision risk of those who participate in it; it has no impact on the collision risk of those who do not participate. Uptake of the course amongst novice drivers in Wales is low, with just 1 in 17 choosing to participate. Given the low level of participation, it is also possible that those who do undertake Pass Plus Cymru are significantly different in their attitudes to road safety than those who do not participate. This was also the conclusion of Elliot (2006) who believed that those who volunteer to take Pass Plus are not representative of new drivers and could represent those who recognise that they may need additional training. Furthermore it is unlikely that any programme that only reaches 6% of young drivers can have any significant impact on collision statistics.

- 3.77** Atkins (2011) concluded that the case for making Pass Plus compulsory in its current form is weak. Although that is not what is under discussion here, the same concerns that are raised in relation to making it compulsory also exist in relation to effectiveness.
- 3.78** More generally, post licence training can have both positive and negative effects on driver safety (OECD / ECMT, 2006). Training on vehicle control skills such as skidding can lead to negative outcomes, but risk awareness, knowledge, experience and recognition of dangers can be associated with positive outcomes (OECD / ECMT, 2006).

## 4. Pass Plus Cymru: Stakeholder and young people's views

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### Key points

- Management of Pass Plus Cymru varies significantly across Wales. Variations in management styles are reflected in differences in costs per person with the programme costing twice as much in some authorities than others.
- Road Safety Officers were generally very satisfied with the way the programme is managed.
- The Welsh Government subsidy is intended to bring additional resource to young driver safety initiatives, but Road Safety Officers thought it unlikely that Local Authorities would subsidise Pass Plus Cymru themselves.
- The online survey identified the importance of the ADIs in promoting the programme.
- Young people's motivations for participating in Pass Plus Cymru are to gain experience of motorways and other types of roads, followed by a wish to become a safer driver.
- Stakeholder research identified high levels of satisfaction with the practical side of Pass Plus Cymru, with reservations relating to difficulties of delivering adverse weather and night time modules, an over-emphasis on motorway driving and some concerns about not being able to actively monitor the practical sessions directly.
- The majority of RSOs considered that the workshop was a valuable and worthwhile addition to the practical element of Pass Plus, with some concerns about its content, format and delivery. 80% of young people considered each element of the theory workshop to be useful.
- There is insufficient data collected to understand whether Pass Plus Cymru reaches those who are at most of risk of collisions. By geography there appears to be little 'fit' between uptake and collision statistics.
- Whilst Pass Plus Cymru is monitored in a fairly consistent way across Wales, subsequent analysis and use of that information varies widely and is not routinely shared with the Welsh Government.
- The monitoring returns, are very positive, with extremely high levels of satisfaction across the practical and workshop sessions
- The survey showed that 13% had a collision in the 12 months following Pass Plus Cymru. It can be concluded, therefore, that Pass Plus Cymru participants have a marginally lower risk of crashing in their first 12 months

### Introduction

- 4.1 The previous chapter provides a strategic analysis of the components of Pass Plus Cymru based on best practice. In this chapter some of the operational aspects of Pass Plus Cymru are examined using the views gained from stakeholders and young people. Overall, the feedback was extremely positive and generally Pass Plus Cymru is a well-regarded programme.

- 4.2 The young people's survey generated 389 responses drawn from each local authority in Wales and representing a cross-section of ages. Details of the sample structure are set out in Appendix 2.

### The administration of Pass Plus Cymru

- 4.3 The management of Pass Plus Cymru has evolved over the years that it has been in operation. Originally administered across the whole of Wales by MAC Driver Training, several years ago it was taken back into local administration. Nevertheless, most local authorities are still working collaboratively and MAC Driver Training continues to manage the Pass Plus Cymru contract for six authorities in the north of Wales. Elsewhere there are two main clusters, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council manages the programme on behalf of itself and 3 other authorities in the South West, and Rhondda Cynon Taf holds the largest contract administering the programme for 9 authorities in South Wales. Authorities in Bridgend, Ceredigion and Powys manage their own programmes, largely to reduce administration costs.
- 4.4 In the stakeholder interviews, RSOs were generally very satisfied with the way the programme is managed with particular praise for the management by MAC Driver Training and Neath Port Talbot. The value of a dedicated officer to manage the programme is seen to make a significant difference to how the programme is run. Another benefit of collaboration is that young people are sometimes able to attend courses hosted in other counties if that is more convenient for them.
- 4.5 In discussions with RSOs it was noticeable that despite a common framework for the programme, it is now managed quite differently in different parts of the country with variation in the way it is promoted; the ways in which bookings are followed up; ways of paying for the course; achieved completion rates and monitoring. Although some local flexibility in itself is not an issue, the impact of different styles of management is evident in relation to delivery and uptake, for instance, some areas have quite a high dropout rate between (a) people booking on the course and then taking part or (b) failing to complete the practical session after attending the discussion workshop. Where the programme is managed effectively this is overcome through close contact with the ADIs, follow up with clients and online booking and payment through Paypal from the outset which reduces drop out to a minimum compared with 27% drop out elsewhere.

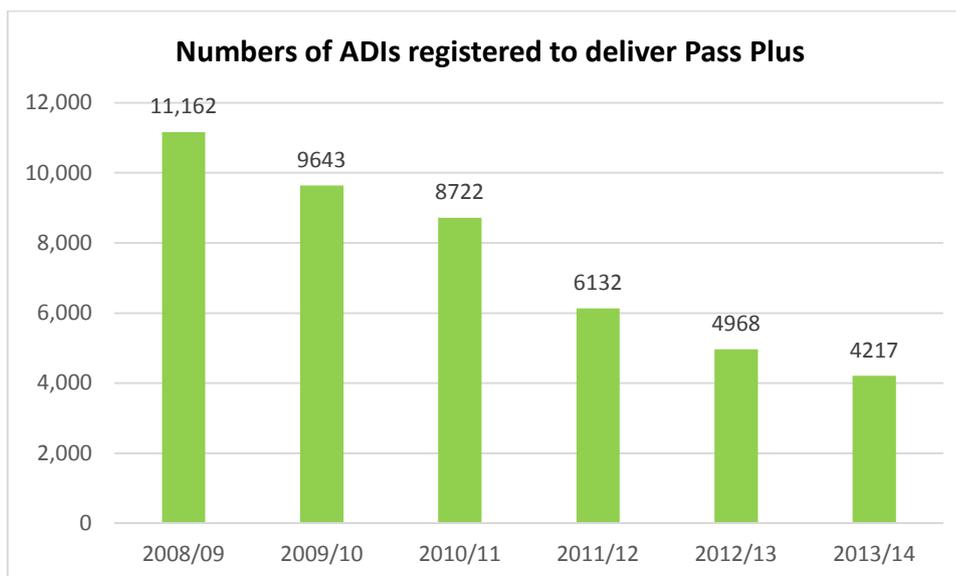
### Costs

- 4.6 Pass Plus Cymru is subsidised by the Welsh Government with funds allocated annually for road safety using a formula based on KSI statistics and population figures. The grant is designed to be additional to local authority road safety resources. Within the overall budget, local authorities determine the amount they wish to spend on Pass Plus Cymru.
- 4.7 Variations in management styles are reflected in differences in costs per person with the programme costing twice as much in some authorities than others. Costs are made up of the ADI fee (£80); and administration costs, with an additional £20 from the participant. Venues are generally made available free of charge, as is the attendance of emergency service personnel. In the areas which Neath Port Talbot manages ADIs are paid £90 which has helped secure on-going interest in the scheme. Therefore, apart from this difference, the variation is wholly accounted for by administration, which as has been noted above, varies widely.
- 4.8 Where costs work out at £80 per person this is an artificially low figure with the local authority absorbing the administration costs as a 'contribution in kind'.

- 4.9 Designed as additional funding, RSOs were clear that it was very unlikely that they would be able to subsidise Pass Plus Cymru themselves. Road safety resources at a local level have come under a number of pressures and there have been cuts to capital elements of road safety grants, and road safety funding is no longer ring-fenced. This means funding for road safety measures cannot be guaranteed during competition for resources. In addition, there are other pressures on local authority funding from wider efficiency savings.

### Promotion

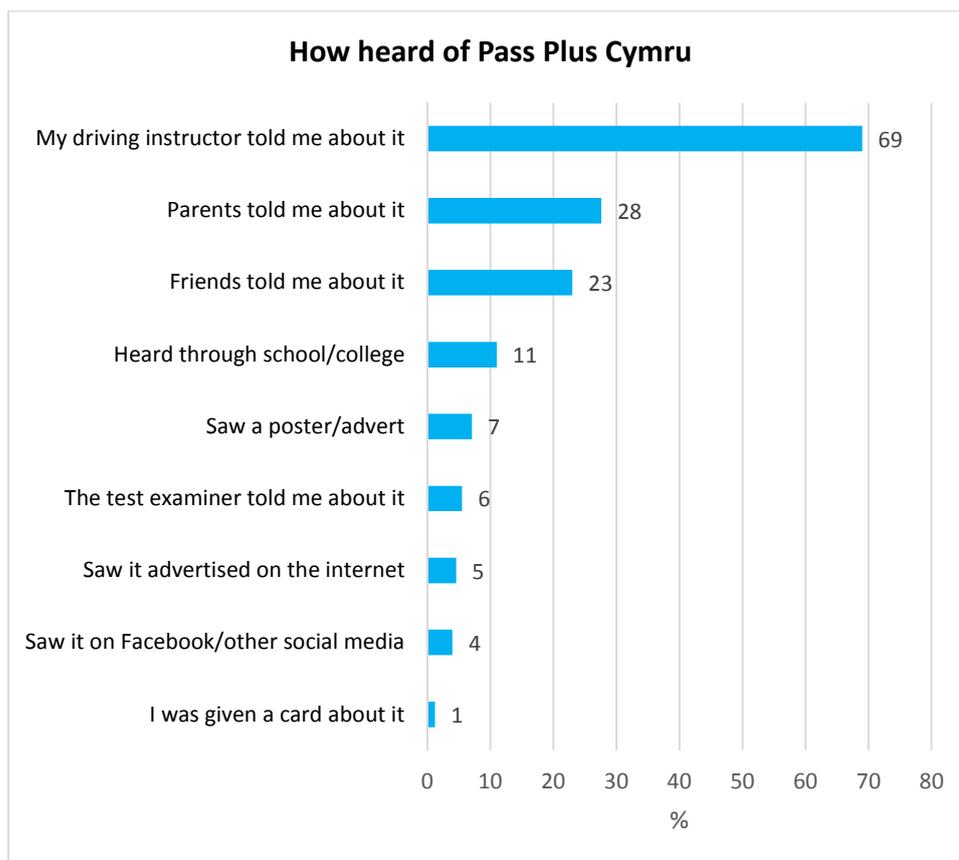
- 4.10 Local authorities use a wide range of methods to engage young people from social media, school visits, press releases and talks e.g. to young farmers associations. RoSPA manages the booking website and deals with email enquiries and telephone enquiries to the national point of contact. Some authorities would like greater freedom in relation to the publicity material they are able to use (z cards and posters), noting that the publicity available does not mention the workshop element of Pass Plus and that the Dragon Driver website can be difficult to navigate with key information such as that the practical sessions are preceded by a workshop; details of when and how the fee is payable; and the fact that there is no test being difficult to find.
- 4.11 Concerns were widely expressed about a fall in numbers in the current financial year. This was believed to be in part because of a misunderstanding about what promotional activities were eligible for expenditure from the grant funding. But there was a widespread view that there is scope for more promotion across Wales and real scope to improve the uptake. However, individual authorities are cautious about generating high levels of interest which can then not be funded.
- 4.12 Some authorities have been creative in taking Pass Plus Cymru out to key local employers such as the Royal Mail and Tata Steel to reach a different audience and to enable apprentices to benefit from the scheme. These initiatives have been well received.
- 4.13 ADIs are seen as central to engaging young people and there was some concern that because their payment levels have not increased in ten years they are less inclined to promote the scheme. There are some reports that ADIs would rather engage learners in the standard Pass Plus which is more lucrative for them. In addition there was a suggestion that new ADIs are not being kept informed of Pass Plus Cymru with one interviewee reporting that when they visited a test centre, the ADIs were not even aware that Pass Plus Cymru was still going.
- 4.14 In fact, statistics provided by the DVSA show that the decline in interest in Pass Plus is universal with a year on year decline in the numbers applying for registration across Wales, England and Scotland:



Source: FOI DVSA

**Chart 4.1: Trends in the numbers of ADIs registering for Pass Plus in Wales, Scotland and England**

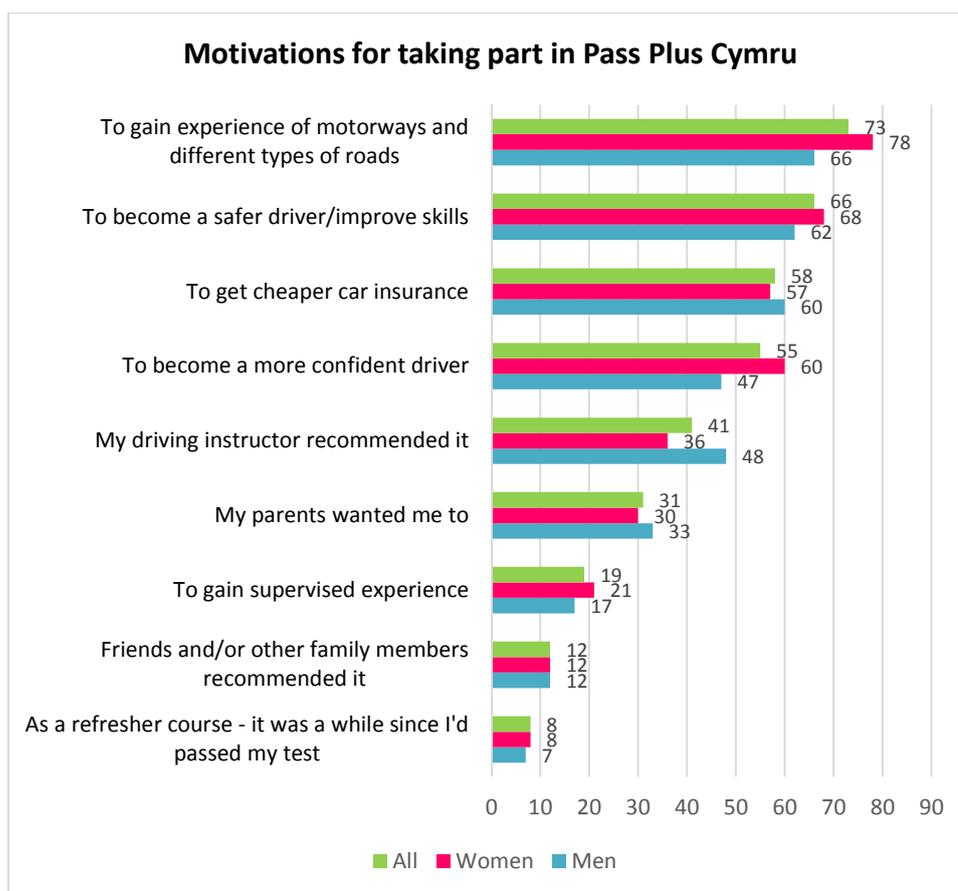
- 4.15** In Neath Port Talbot, good practice ADI engagement has been the establishment of a Driving Instructor Association five years ago which has been a way of deepening partnership working and a means of addressing the professional development needs of ADIs, whilst providing close links with the local Road Safety Team. The Association has 40-50 members and around 20-30 of these regularly attend the monthly meetings, which cover a range of topics such as local signage on the driving test route, ipad software, the Drive for Life course and the trials of the new practical test. The authority also puts on first aid courses for the ADIs and arranges visits to Police Driver Training Centres. A member of the road safety team attends the meetings. As a result of the strength of this partnership, the number of ADIs registered to deliver Pass Plus Cymru has increased and the local authority do not have to advertise Pass Plus Cymru as the ADIs are willing to promote it and are actively involved with the programme. It is understood that Swansea Council and Carmarthen Council are now considering following this example.
- 4.16** Findings from the online survey of beneficiaries of Pass Plus Cymru emphasise the importance of the ADIs in promoting the programme; their interest and involvement appears to be crucial. This was by far the most significant form of promotion, followed by more informal ways via parents and friends.



Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

**Chart 4.2: Ways in which participants heard of Pass Plus Cymru (multiple response)**

4.17 It is also interesting to note that whilst reduced insurance was identified as one of the main selling points of the programme, interest in gaining experience of motorways and other types of roads was the prime motivator, followed by a wish to be become a safer driver. As can be seen, ADIs are particularly important to the programme’s uptake by young men, with almost 1 in 2 citing it as a reason for participation:



Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

Chart 4.3: Motivations for participating in Pass Plus Cymru (multiple response)

### Stakeholder views on the practical sessions

4.18 It was shown in Chapter 3 that a comparison of each of the practical modules of Pass Plus Cymru with known collision risk factors suggests that there is scope to improve the fit between the two, nevertheless, the stakeholder research identified high levels of satisfaction with the practical side of Pass Plus Cymru with RSOs commenting that the modules are “comprehensive” and “well put together”. The motorway element is seen as a key draw for young people, especially those who are going to university. Primary research with young drivers (above) confirms this analysis.

4.19 The only concerns expressed in interviews were:

- **Timing:** An absence of adverse weather conditions means that learning has to be done with hints and tips.
- Similarly, it is not always practical to deliver **night-time** training.
- Some instructors are known to spend a lot of time on the motorway and it was thought that young people might not always get the learning they want.
- Inability to monitor delivery.

- 4.20 Whilst RSOs are able to monitor the quality of the workshop, they do not consider that they have any authority/resources to monitor the practical delivery and could not be sure that if they did sit in on sessions that those sessions would be typical. There was also some belief that ADIs sometimes do not deliver the whole 9 hours, but the only way of knowing is if the young person reports it so that the administrator can follow it up. As the data shows below, on average only 22% of the practical evaluation forms are returned so there are clear limitations in monitoring this aspect of the programme. Looking ahead, maybe a mystery shopper approach could be considered or instructors required to pass some Police Class 1 Driver training in order to become approved providers.
- 4.21 The survey provides some reassurance in this respect, with only a minority (between 1% and 5%) of young people saying that they were not taught particular modules. This rises to 1 in 5, however, in relation to driving at night; one of the main risk factors for young drivers.

### Stakeholder views: The discussion workshop

- 4.22 In the stakeholder interviews the majority of RSOs considered that the workshop was a valuable and worthwhile addition to the practical element of Pass Plus. Generally, RSOs attend the workshops and are able to see how they are delivered and received. However, a number of issues were raised in relation to content, format and delivery:

#### Content

- 4.23 The element which raised most comment was the Cow DVD. Several mentioned it favourably, for example, *"The Cow film is good and I don't think that could be better, you can use it regarding texting, drink driving and it seems to be effective"*. Although the vast majority valued the DVD, a minority were dissatisfied.
- 4.24 One interviewee believed that it was *'far too long'* and whilst extracts could be used *'there needs to be far more input from the emergency services in person. They bring the experience and first-hand knowledge – it comes across better with real life experience'*. Another said *"It's outdated and doesn't work."*
- 4.25 Another commented that the Cow DVD *"drags on"* and then it is difficult to re-engage the young people. The interviewee noted that some authorities have been showing the Cow DVD in schools and it is available on YouTube so it loses its impact if some young people have already seen it.
- 4.26 Of course, there are ways of holding attention, depending on the skills of the presenter, one interviewee mentions that the Cow DVD is the longest that young people have to concentrate *"so I prepare them for that and ask them to think about buzz words for afterwards to keep their attention – their retention of facts at the end is pretty good."*
- 4.27 From a purist perspective, best practice literature does raise questions as to whether shock tactics work, with evaluations showing little evidence of positive impact on future behaviour. In the survey, 82% of young people considered that the DVD was useful; 7% thought it was not useful and 11% could not remember what they had learnt from it.
- 4.28 The other element of concern is the first slide with a tray of objects. This has become a memory test, whereas it was originally designed to deal with distraction. *"The tray has moved from observation -which was appropriate - to memory which is not appropriate"*. Not only is the slide deemed to be inappropriate it turns people off from the start:

*"The very first slide is an observation test with a tray and that doesn't bode well"*

*"You need a showstopper, something to grab their attention and get them interested. The observation tray is a bit flat and a bit childish, There was a slide with a monkey and baseball team (but there were license issues) – it brought humour to it and grabbed their attention more"*

- 4.29 Another considered that the Irish film clips are dated and that there are newer films available. The clips are also covered in the Cow DVD. One interviewee suggested that the session would be better with some tailor-made videos rather than extracts from different films.
- 4.30 One interviewee also added that the session is generally very negative and is about consequences of non-safe driving amongst some young people, rather than the positives of how to drive more safely.

#### **Format**

- 4.31 In all cases it appears that group sizes are restricted, varying from a maximum of 16 to a maximum of 20 and in some areas group sizes are a lot smaller than that. By limiting group sizes in this way the presenters have the opportunity to invite young people to get involved in their own learning, have a chance to answer their questions and discuss commonly held misconceptions about road safety. However, whilst skilled presenters may be able to engage young people effectively, the 'one size fits all' approach appears in some cases to limit the flexibility which presenters may need to interact effectively with learners and it was criticised as "rigid" and had become a presentation or 'classroom style learning' as one interviewer put it. Obviously much depends on the skills of the presenter, but in some areas this caused concern:

*"There's no thought for the students, they're dictated to"*

*"It's a tick box exercise, there's no wow factor"*

*"They're asked a question and there's only one answer, there's no thought process, they sit there for 3 hours and their minds can be on anything and everything apart from the evening"*

*"It needs totally revamping, it needs to be more flexible, to have the themes and then the individual authorities can decide how to use it."*

*"It's outdated. There's no engagement it's just going through the motions"*

*"Presenters struggle to get through everything in the time they have – would distance learning be more convenient and interactive?"*

*"Don't like it being prescribed slide by slide. We need to get the messages across, but shouldn't we ask, 'what do you need to know?'" We would like more freedom, it's gone from being too lax to being too rigid."*

*"The content is fine but the artwork and font is not very dynamic for 17 year olds"*

**4.32** As is well understood, learning is frequently most effective when learners have the opportunity to think and talk together, to discuss ideas, question, analyse and solve problems, without the constant mediation of the supervising adult. Essentially young people's learning is best served when they have opportunities to learn with and from each other, and are shown how to do so effectively. By means of appropriate training and support, the young people become active players in the educational process rather than passive recipients of a set message. It is believed that this sort of dynamic learning was the original intention when the workshop was designed – after all it was called the ‘discussion forum workshop’ and guidance accompanying the presentation asked for it to be used ‘flexibly’. However, through time that flexibility appears to have been lost in some areas and if it is to revert back to its original aims, then the skill of the presenters is paramount and they need greater flexibility over delivery to introduce new ways of getting over the message. There should also be consideration to a rebalancing of the workshop so that there is less delivery of information to a passive audience and more engagement and discussion.

### **Delivery**

**4.33** Of course, the delivery of the workshop depends very much on the quality of the presenters and the point was made that road safety can sometimes sound a bit dry to students and it is important that the learning activity can be tailored to suit the group in attendance. Making a pitch for the middle ground can engage some but perhaps not all and much will depend on the skill of the presenter as to how accessible the workshop is.

**4.34** In Neath Port Talbot the workshop is delivered by presenters who have a teaching qualification, but this does not seem to be the norm. Research by June Howlett on behalf of Road Safety GB reviewed practice across the country in relation to post-test instruction and found that some schemes use only Grade 5/6 ADIs. Others select by interview and a practical drive. The majority had a training and registration event to select instructors to provide some quality assurance over delivery. In Wales however, it was said that the programme attracts some of the lower grade instructors, as there is not enough money in it for the very good instructors, so alternative approaches and a change in the funding may be something that could be considered in Wales.

**4.35** In one local authority area an issue about conflict between the ADIs who present and those who deliver the practical course was raised, with concerns voiced that presenters then benefit by also delivering the practical training, rather than the young person's original instructor. As designed, there is intended to be a clear contractual separation between those who teach and those who deliver the practical training thereby avoiding any conflict of interest, but this separation appears to have been lost over the years. Another interviewee stated that it appeared to be a bit of a postcode lottery as to which ADIs were nominated to deliver the practical training.

**4.36** Another local authority reported that an experienced instructor gave up presenting Pass Plus Cymru because he did not consider that in the prescribed format he was able to deliver effective learning.

**4.37** Whilst a partnership approach would appear to be good practice, a number of concerns were raised by RSOs about the Fire and Rescue service – in part because of frequent changes in personnel so there is a constant need to go through the course with new officers. The point was also made that fire service personnel are not educators and that they may tend to talk at young people rather than with them. It was said that there is not a real role for them in the presentation.

**4.38** The timing of courses was also mentioned:

*“The length of the sessions it’s 6.30 – 9pm at the end of the day, some of the young drivers have been at work all day, it’s too long and then they may have a long journey home, it could be shortened.”*

*“The presentation starts at 6pm and most of the young people have been at school, college or work all day and come straight along, maybe not having had anything to eat.”*

*“Workshops need humour to balance with the dark stuff; it needs to keep them awake. We have the graveyard shift after school in the evening, we need to develop relationships really quickly, we’ve got to get them on board.”*

- 4.39 Neath Port Talbot Council are currently experimenting with a Saturday morning session to address this issue and it will be interesting to review levels of uptake and engagement with the workshop at that time of day and its impact on overall costs. Cardiff already take this approach with some success.

**Overall**

- 4.40 Clearly, in the right hands the workshop can be delivered in an engaging way, at different times of the day and in ways which allow for peer to peer learning, but in some areas the prescribed format is perceived as a limitation. Although the vast majority of stakeholders were aware of ways in which they could raise issues about Pass Plus Cymru, this does not seem to have happened, in part because it is seen as a ‘Road Safety Wales programme’ and associated with this there is a lack of ‘ownership’ of Pass Plus Cymru at local authority level.

*“On the whole it’s still a very good scheme, a bit tired, and like all good schemes it’s not always promoted and then it’s very difficult to keep the momentum going”*

**Quality of Pass Plus Cymru**

- 4.41 On the whole, RSOs were satisfied that presenters were sticking to the established syllabus, although as noted above, some saw this as a weakness inhibiting the presenters’ flexibility to respond to the group dynamics and concerns. In some areas the topics are covered in a shorter timescale by omitting some of the video clips.
- 4.42 In the survey, the vast majority of participants found each element useful, especially the information on driving with appropriate speeds and drinking and driving. In respect of drink driving there was a statistically significant difference in findings by gender, with men especially rating this information as useful.

	Useful (%)	Not useful (%)	Can't remember what I learnt (%)
COW DVD	82	7	11
Hazard perception	87	4	9
Appropriate speeds	91	5	4
Drinking and driving	91	8	1
Drug use and driving	86	11	3
Motorway driving	89	5	6
Need to wear seatbelts	84	15	2

Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

**Table 4.1: Value of different elements of Pass Plus Cymru; percentages**

4.43 Asked what other areas they thought would be useful to cover in the workshop, participants were keen to understand how to deal with a breakdown and how to respond to an accident:

Dealing with a breakdown	65%
How to respond to an accident	64%
Car maintenance	53%
How to change a wheel	50%
Getting in the correct lane when approaching roundabouts	41%
Motorcycle awareness	29%
How to pass cyclists safely	28%
Parking	27%
How to use a SATNAV	21%
How to pass horses safely	18%

Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

**Table 4.2: Other areas which young people would find useful; percent identifying each**

Other suggestions included:

- *“As a motorcyclist I was shocked at the lack of motorcycle awareness”*
- *“How to deal with road rage- I had a horrible incident where a man followed me, overtook and stopped in front of me, then got out of his vehicle and started shouting abuse. I had no idea that what he was doing was illegal and also no idea how to handle it. It was terrifying.”*
- *“Driving through narrow lanes (also in the dark)”*

## Targeting – who does Pass Plus Cymru reach?

4.44 A significant gap in the evaluation data is the absence of core beneficiary data on the uptake of Pass Plus Cymru. Whilst administrators have personal details on the booking form, on the evaluation forms there is no information on either gender or age so there is no way of knowing who the programme reaches. Whilst the 12 month post evaluation forms ask for information on driving experience (collisions/ penalty points etc) the poor rate of return of these forms means there is no way of knowing how representative they are. In the survey, the split of respondents was 60% women and 40% men.

4.45 Asked how they rated their knowledge of how to drive safely *before* they embarked on Pass Plus Cymru, 75% rated it as ‘very good’ or ‘good’; 23% as ‘OK’ and 1.5% as ‘poor’. This gives some credence to the theory that safer drivers are attracted to the programme, but there is no comparative data to understand how other novice drivers would rate themselves, so this remains unproven.

4.46 In the Scottish Debate on young driver safety it was reported that based on feedback from young people *“those most at risk (including persistent driving offenders) are unlikely to undertake additional post-test training unless it becomes mandatory, for example, as a condition for obtaining a full licence”*. This view was reflected in the stakeholder interviews with a number of RSOs expressing concerns about the difficulty of targeting the right people:

*“It doesn’t always reach those who might benefit most”*

*“I wonder whether we are getting the right people. It’s often the parents who ring up and that might not be in relation to the most at risk group”*

*“You tend to get the more able people on courses”*

*“Are we targeting children with conscientious parents and conscientious instructors? The hard to reach students are not targeted. We don’t work in a multi agency way for example with the youth service. They’re all ‘nice’ kids other than the odd one.”*

- 4.47 Information from Transport for Buckinghamshire suggests that Pass Plus does not have the right image with young people and is seen as something for ‘goody goodies’.
- 4.48 Although some concerns were expressed about targeting, **nobody** interviewed thought that the programme ought to be restricted to certain types of driver or geography and in fact one of its strengths was seen as its relevance to everyone.
- 4.49 As well as there being certain types of young drivers being more at risk, statistics also point to some parts of Wales having higher death and casualty rates than average, and it might be expected that young drivers in those areas would benefit more from Pass Plus Cymru. In fact, the uptake of the programme shows a poor ‘fit’ with apparent needs. Thus, greatest numbers participate in Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot, Swansea and Powys contrasting with lower figures in Blaenau Gwent, Newport, Caerphilly and Monmouth. As noted elsewhere, the KSI statistics for Gwent are amongst the worst in Britain yet 4 of the 5 authorities in the county have the lowest numbers participating in Pass Plus Cymru:

Local Authority	Numbers of participants in 2013/14	Police Force area
Blaenau Gwent	23	Gwent
Newport	50	Gwent
Caerphilly	53	Gwent
Monmouth	53	Gwent
Denbighshire	61	North Wales
Anglesey	72	North Wales
Merthyr	73	South Wales
Torfaen	73	Gwent
Pembrokeshire	81	Dyfed Powys
Wrexham	81	North Wales
RCT	82	South Wales
Flintshire	86	North Wales
Conwy	90	North Wales
Carmarthenshire	92	Dyfed Powys
VoG	105	South Wales
Cardiff	133	South Wales
Ceredigion	143	Dyfed Powys
Gwynedd	146	North Wales
Powys	171	Dyfed Powys
Swansea	171	South Wales
Neath Port Talbot	187	South Wales
Bridgend	215	South Wales

Source: Management information statistics

Table 4.2: Uptake of Pass Plus Cymru in the latest full financial year (2013/14)

**4.50** Of course, it may be that there are fewer license holders in these areas but as this data is not available at local authority level, an examination of test pass statistics as a proxy has been undertaken. This shows that authorities with low levels of take up appear to reach lower proportions of their 16-24 year old population and vice versa suggesting Pass Plus Cymru is more successful in terms of take up in some areas than others, not necessarily where the KSI statistics are highest.

Police area	Test passes 2013/14 amongst 17-25 yr olds	Pass Plus Cymru participants 2013/14	
		Numbers	%
Gwent	4,726	202	4.3
Dyfed Powys	5,026	406	8.1
North Wales	4,459	455	10.2
South Wales	10,778	1047	9.7

Source: Adapted from DVA statistics

**Table: 4.3: Pass Plus Cymru uptake relative to the number of test passes amongst young people in 2013/14**

4.51 Trends in uptake since 2009 show variable performance with no clear pattern in many areas, although numbers have increased steadily in Gwynedd contrasting, for instance, with sharp falls in Blaenau Gwent. Officials in Gwynedd attribute the uptake to the strength of partnership working and a targeted focus on the issues identified by the Road Safety Framework for Wales. It is also notable that Bridgend has had strong performance in 2013/14 making it the largest deliverer of Pass Plus Cymru, accounting for 10% of all places despite accounting for just 7% of the 16-24 year old population:

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Anglesey	40	61	52	67	72
Blaenau Gwent	82	64	34	21	23
Bridgend	207	156	139	167	215
Caerphilly	97	63	57	57	53
Cardiff	162	173	139	168	133
Carmarthenshire	85	101	103	95	92
Ceredigion	175	128	115	151	143
Conwy	122	99	98	83	90
Denbighshire	113	103	95	78	61
Flintshire	106	106	65	57	86
Gwynedd	64	57	81	105	146
Merthyr	107	80	28	39	73
Monmouth	57	83	73	35	53
Neath Port Talbot	169	181	165	194	187
Newport	77	72	79	32	50
Pembrokeshire	124	106	82	64	81
Powys	137	153	225	200	171
RCT	75	89	117	86	82
Swansea	236	173	176	160	171
Vale of Glamorgan	129	132	124	111	105
Torfaen	79	68	43	48	73
Wrexham	137	88	73	58	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>2580</b>	<b>2336</b>	<b>2163</b>	<b>2071</b>	<b>2241</b>

Source: Management information statistics

Table 4.4: Uptake of Pass Plus Cymru; trends from 2009/10 -2013/14

## Strengths and weaknesses of Pass Plus Cymru

4.52 In interview, stakeholders were asked to identify what they considered to be the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. Comments are set out below:

### Strengths

- Gives young drivers a breadth of experience they wouldn't otherwise have
- It's pan Wales
- Sends out a strong road safety message
- There are no other interventions for young people
- It provides an input at an early stage and maintains momentum of learning
- It is well co-ordinated
- Very accessible
- Affordability



### Weaknesses

- Targeting is difficult
- It is not compulsory and not used for referrals
- The course material
- Length and content of workshop
- Some things have a life expectancy like DVDs and visual images which need to be kept under review
- Effectiveness of workshop depends on the skills of the presenter, they need presenting skills
- Presentation is dated
- Funding level for ADIs means they are less interested in promoting it
- It's hard to monitor the practical sessions
- Difficult to interest people in it
- Not allowed to use the funding for advertising

### Other initiatives

4.53 Interviewees were keen to have a suite of road safety initiatives which addressed needs from pre-school through to adulthood and for most of them, Pass Plus Cymru was the only post driver education delivered to young people. Activities such as Megadrive are for pre-drivers and Deadly Impacts delivered at school were seen as complementary to Pass Plus Cymru and not as substitutes. Three initiatives directed at novice drivers were:

- **Operation Revolution:** A two day course running in North Wales led by the Fire Service with six local authorities contributing and funding from the Welsh Government. 'Revolution', which has been described as 'a new, proactive approach to road safety education', is aimed at 16 - 25 year olds who have been involved in or subject to driving offences in their area. The interactive course covers various aspects such as the consequences of fatal or serious injury road traffic collisions on the drivers, their passengers and their family and friends as well as the type of psychological, punitive and financial impacts being involved in a road traffic collision can bring. A number of agencies have had input into the course with much of the learning based around the five main causes of fatal road traffic collisions in Wales, known as the 'Fatal 5'. It should be noted that this has not yet been evaluated in terms of impact.
- **Options:** Is a targeted intervention identified by Caerphilly Council. It is headed by the police and pulls up drivers who are not wearing their seatbelts or who are using mobile phones. Those caught are given the choice of a fixed penalty or watching a presentation so it actively targets those committing offences. It is only delivered once a year and could be more effective if run monthly. It raises the question as to whether Pass Plus Cymru could be made a Court Disposal Option.
- **Drive IQ:** is run in Neath Port Talbot. It raises awareness of the hazards on the roads and aims to educate novice and potential drivers about the need to behave responsibly before they take the wheel. The purpose is to raise levels of self-awareness and build coping strategies to keep them safe when they drive, particularly unaccompanied post driving test. All the modules are based on evidence and scientific research and have been designed around the European Goals for Driver Education to address driver attitudes, beliefs and behaviour even before

students sit in the driver's seat. Once the students have passed their test they can take Drive IQ Pro which is accredited with a BTEC qualification. Drive IQ is recognised as part of the Welsh Bac programme.

- 4.54 A number of interviewees raised the question as to whether road safety could be made part of the school curriculum.

### Current monitoring and evaluation methods

- 4.55 When Pass Plus Cymru was introduced a set of evaluation forms was produced and with some slight variations these are still used today.

- 4.56 The first form is handed out at the workshop and collected the same day. The second evaluation form is either posted out following the practical course or handed out by the ADI. The final evaluation is undertaken 12 months after the practical through a postal self-completion form.

- 4.57 The benefit of the evaluation model is that it is relatively short and undemanding for young people to complete. However, as can be seen from the return rates for Wales in 2013/14 the numbers of evaluation forms received for the practical session and 12 month post evaluation are very low with, on average, around 1 in 4 and 1 in 5 forms being returned. Whilst it would be expected that there would be a considerable fall in returns after one year, the reasons for the low number of practical returns are unclear. Note that these averages are from the data supplied from all administrators across Wales, and individual rates of return for each local authority are likely to vary widely.

- **Theory workshop: 2121 returns from 2241 candidates – 95% of total**
- **Practical sessions: 595 returns – 27% of total**
- **12 month post course evaluation 466 returns - 21% of total**

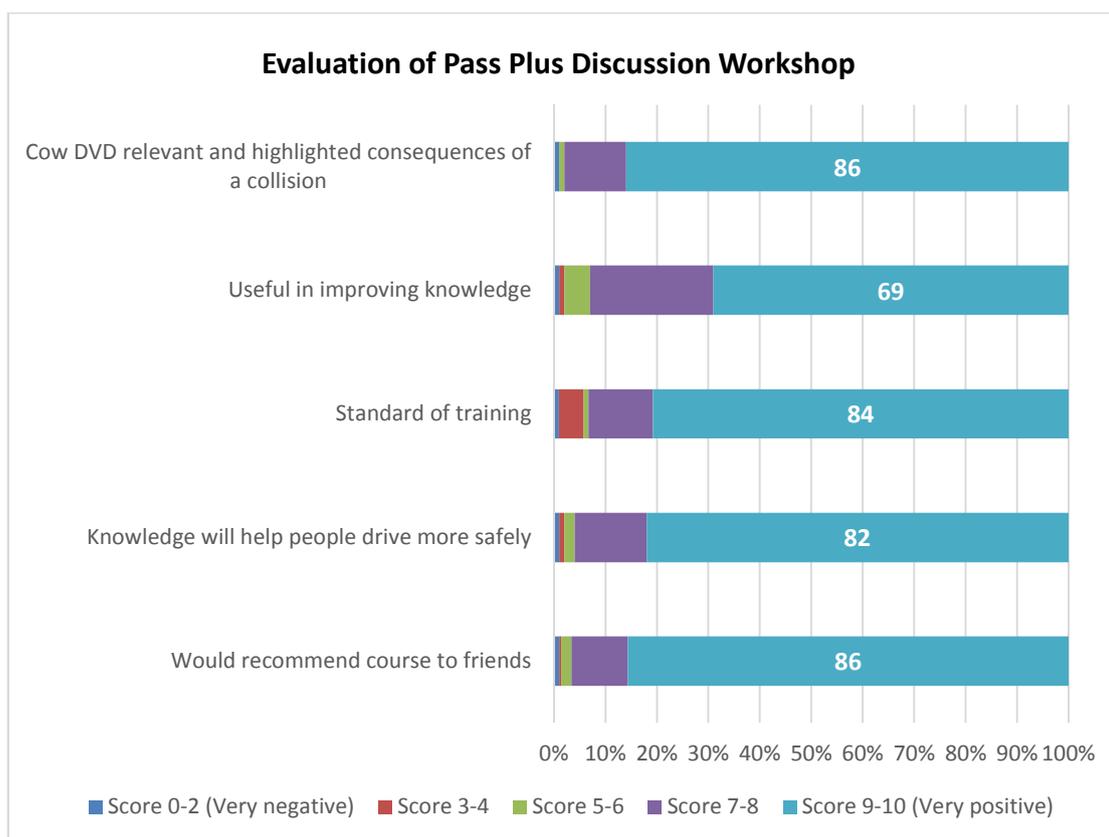
- 4.58 A particular issue raised by a number of interviewees was that there was no way of effectively monitoring the practical delivery and the quality of tuition. Although candidates have evaluation forms these do not generally identify the content of the sessions (although in Ceredigion variations have been introduced to capture aspects of this) and as is noted above, on average, return rates are low.

- 4.59 There was strong support for the monitoring to continue to be paper-based, with one authority having trialled online feedback and found it to be less successful than sending out pre-paid envelopes for survey returns. However, if the above averages are typical then there may need to be a review of the monitoring process to secure improved rates of return. For instance, when a young person signs up for Pass Plus Cymru it could be made clear that the subsidy confers an obligation to provide feedback at certain points. This is the approach adopted by Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership where, as a condition of a subsidy towards Pass Plus the clients have to submit an annual driving history questionnaire for 3 years. It is not known what the return rate is, but at least the expectation is made explicit.

- 4.60 Whilst Pass Plus Cymru is monitored in a fairly consistent way across Wales, subsequent analysis and use of that information varies widely. In North Wales and South West Wales quarterly/annual reports are produced with findings from the evaluations reported for each local authority area so that authorities have both their own data and other data to compare relative performance. In South Wales, feedback is checked but there is no formal process for notifying local authorities of the outcomes, which in turn tends to foster a lack of 'ownership' for the programme and lack of involvement in it: *"in relation to the young people's feedback, the evaluation goes somewhere, but we don't see the evaluation."* And, *"The actual theory and practical sessions are not monitored ...to ensure that the best is being gained other than an evaluation form which many candidates cannot understand due to the layout of the questions"* Those local authorities which manage their own programme tended to consider that they had a better 'hands on' overview of Pass Plus Cymru and the way it works.
- 4.61 Government guidance on evaluation in the Magenta Book suggests that good evaluations should always provide information which could enable less effective programmes to be improved, support the reinvestment of resources in other activities, or simply save money. More generally, evaluations should generate valuable information and contribute to a wide range of initiatives and objectives, including accountability and good governance. Measuring a programme's impact is not just about demonstrating what has been achieved. The final, crucial stage of the measurement cycle is to learn from the data collected. As funders, therefore, it may have been expected that the evaluation information collected should be shared with the Welsh Government and Road Safety Partnership on a regular basis to allow Pass Plus Cymru to be kept under review and to influence future decision making.

### Findings from the monitoring data

- 4.62 Whatever concerns have been expressed about Pass Plus Cymru, young people who have been on the course are **overwhelmingly positive** about the experience. Over 80% scored the answers at the highest level with the exception of a question on the value of the workshop in improving levels of knowledge where 69% gave the highest rating and a further 24% the next highest rating- still very high levels of satisfaction.



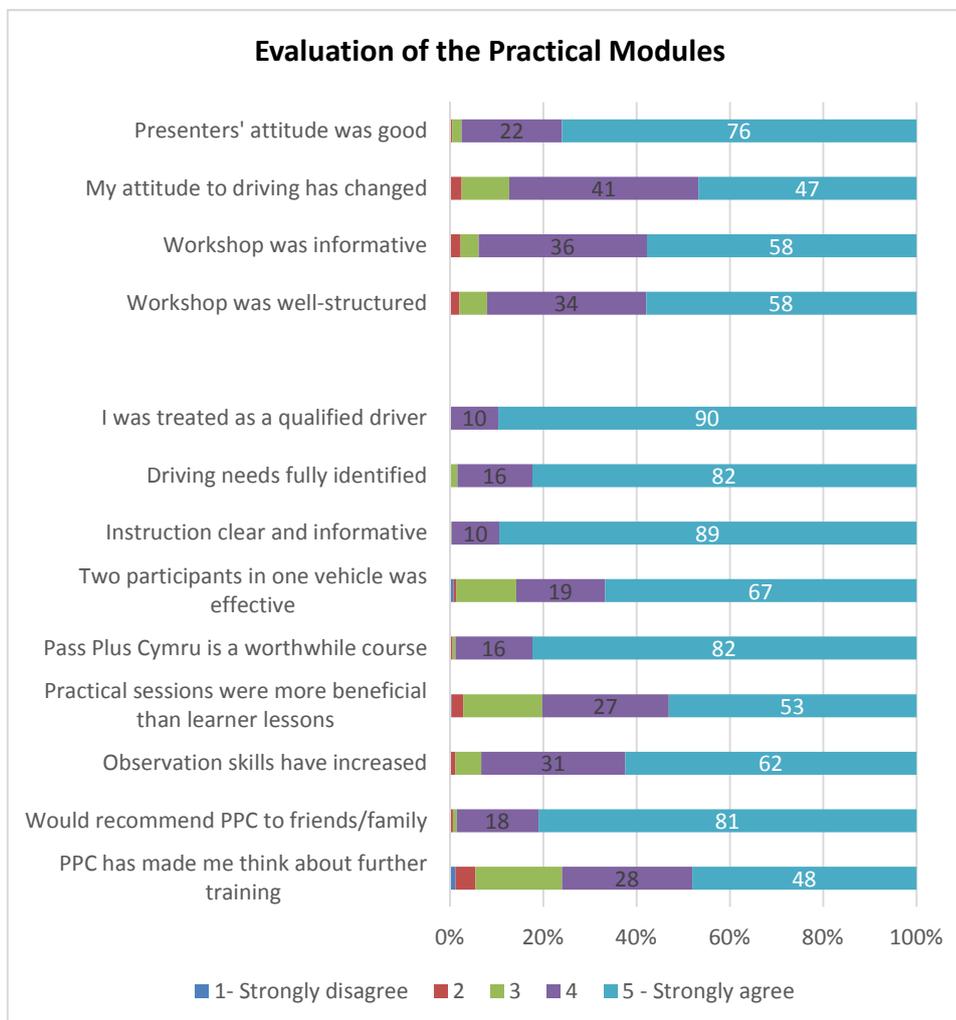
Source: Administrative data for 2013-14

**Chart 4.4: Evaluation of the discussion workshop - combined findings across Wales; percentages**

- 4.63** Furthermore despite some reservations on the part of the RSOs (who will have seen the COW DVD on multiple occasions) 98% believed that the Cow DVD should be shown on all Pass Plus Cymru courses.
- 4.64** There were some minor variations in scores across Wales, but no consistent pattern. For instance, 88% of young people in Merthyr Tydfil gave the highest ratings to the question as to the value of the event in improving their own knowledge compared with 52% in Conwy. 97% of young people in Merthyr Tydfil gave highest ratings as to whether the event would help them drive safely compared with 67% in Carmarthen, but findings are based on relatively small sample sizes so it is not considered that the differences are significant. Whilst fewer people gave the highest scores in some areas, the findings were extremely positive in all areas of Wales.
- 4.65** The evaluation of the practical modules also includes a number of questions about the workshop to assess whether after a short period of time the benefits of the workshop are still apparent. As the data in the chart below shows:
- 98% agreed that their presenters’ attitude was good
  - 88% agreed that their attitudes to driving had changed as a result
  - 94% believed that the workshop was informative and 92% that it was well structured.

4.66 In terms of the practical modules, ratings were extremely high, for example:

- 99% would recommend Pass Plus Cymru to friends and family
- 98% believed it to be a worthwhile course
- 93% agreed that their observations skills had increased



**Source: Administrative data for 2013-14** (Note: The above data excludes data from Ceredigion where questions were asked in a slightly different way)

**Chart 4.5: Evaluation of the practical modules - combined findings across Wales; percentages**

4.67 It should be noted, however, that current levels of uptake would indicate that the actual practice may not reflect the extent of recommendation promised.

- 4.68 12 months on, four of the questions from the practical evaluation are repeated and show that with time there has been no loss of satisfaction with Pass Plus Cymru, which might perhaps have been expected once the initial experience had passed. The main change is that fewer have actually considered further training than expected to:

	<b>After practical</b> % rating 4 or 5 (where 5 is strong agreement)	<b>After 12 months</b> % rating 4 or 5 (where 5 is strong agreement)
I consider PPC to be a worthwhile scheme	98	97
My observation skills have increased	93	95
I have recommended PCC to friends family	99	97
PPC has made me consider further training	76	49

**Source: Administrative data for 2013-14** (Note: The above data excludes data from Ceredigion where questions were asked in a slightly different way)

**Table 4.3: Evaluation of the Pass Plus Cymru 12 months on - combined findings across Wales; percentages**

- 4.69 Overall, **97%** of participants said that Pass Plus Cymru had made them a better driver.

#### **Impact**

- 4.70 Figures from the monitoring information for 2013/14 show a **slight drop** in collisions before and after involvement in Pass Plus Cymru, but these cannot be considered statistically significant:

	12 month evaluations (%)
Been in collision prior to PPC?	5.5
Been in collision since PPC?	4.4
Insurance claim since PPC	2.8
Penalty points since PPC	1.3
Near miss since PPC	8.1

**Source: Administrative data for 2013-14** (Note: The above data excludes data from Ceredigion where questions were asked in a slightly different way)

**Table 4.4: The impact of Pass Plus Cymru 12 months on - combined findings across Wales; percentages**

### **Findings from the survey data**

- 4.71 Asked whether they believed that Pass Plus Cymru had improved their knowledge of how to drive safely, 63% said it had improved a lot; 34% said it was a little improved and 3% thought that their knowledge hadn't changed.

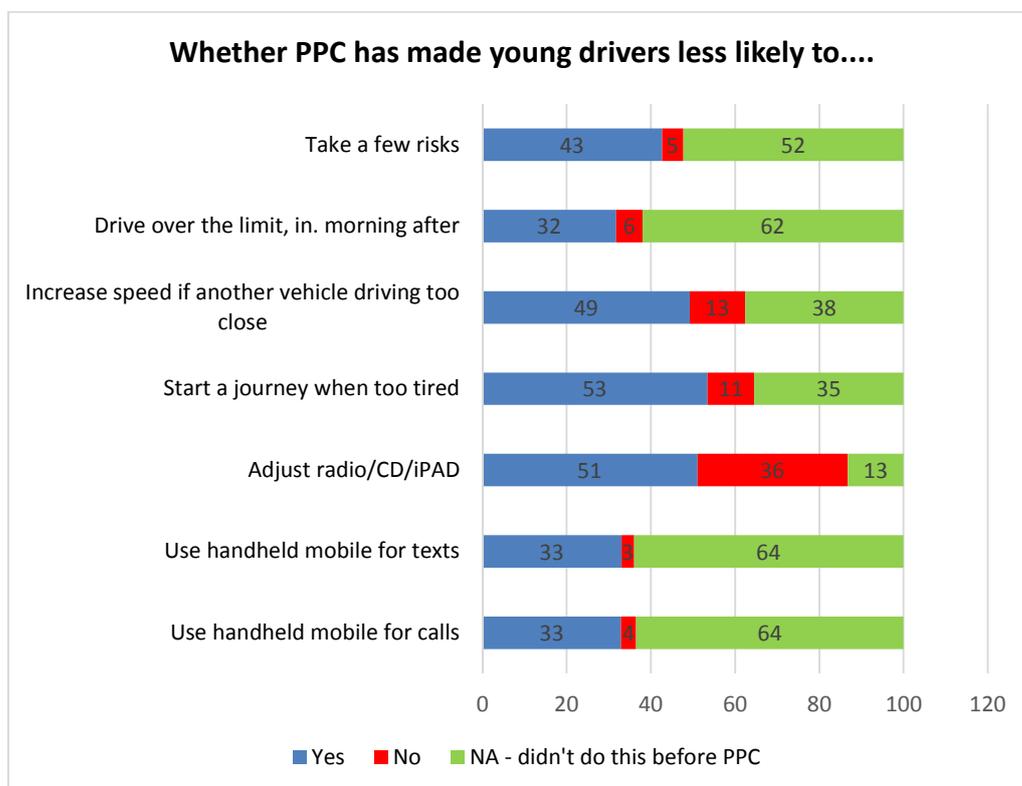
4.72 As a result, 75% thought that they were a safer driver, 74% had better hazard awareness but only 46% took fewer risks:

As a result of Pass Plus Cymru.....	
I am a safer driver	75.0%
I have better awareness of the main hazards drivers face	73.5%
I take fewer risks	46.2%

Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

Table 4.5: Participants' views on the impact of Pass Plus Cymru; percentages

4.73 This low proportion of people who said they took fewer risks seems to reflect the fact that over half the participants believed that they did not take any risks in the first place. Responses suggest that young drivers consider that their behaviours have changed as a result of the programme:



Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

Chart 4.6: Participants' views on the impact of Pass Plus Cymru on their behaviour; percentages

4.74 Further information shows that young people consider that Pass Plus Cymru has made a positive difference across a whole range of indicators:

Pass Plus Cymru has helped me.....	PPC made a lot of difference (%)	PPC made some difference (%)	PPC made no difference (%)
Identify hazardous driving situations	48	47	5
Avoid risky driving situations	54	40	6
Ignore distractions when driving	51	40	8
Tell passengers to stop distracting you when driving	53	32	15
Tell passengers to put their seat belt on	66	18	16
Drive at night	50	29	21
Stay within speed limits even when late	54	30	15
Not answer your mobile phone if it rings when driving	60	15	25
Drive in bad weather conditions	51	36	13
Stop for a rest when feeling tired	56	33	12

Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

**Table 4.7: Participants’ ability to drive more safely as a result of Pass Plus Cymru; percentages**

4.75 Despite these very positive findings, the survey shows that 39% said that they had had one or more near misses within 12 months of passing Pass Plus Cymru. There was a statistically significant difference between men and women with 46% of men having had a near miss compared with 33% of women.

4.76 Furthermore, **13%** had a collision in the 12 months following Pass Plus Cymru. Men had more collisions (16%) than women (11%). 3% of the collisions reported above involved injuries. The 13% collision rate is an identical figure to that found in the ABI evaluation<sup>7</sup> undertaken in 2006, when it was reported that in comparison non Pass Plus drivers had a collision rate of 16% in their first 12 months of driving. As with the ABI survey it can be concluded, therefore, that Pass Plus Cymru participants have a marginally lower risk of crashing in their first 12 months, but it is not known whether the characteristics of those who participate are inherently different or whether this is evidence of success.

## Value for money

4.77 Of all the enhanced Pass Plus schemes reviewed, none were so heavily subsidised as Pass Plus Cymru, with lowest costs elsewhere seeming to be £30. In the survey, young people were asked whether they would have attended the course if they had had to pay different amounts. Responses show that 93% would have done the course if it had cost £30 dropping to half if the fee was £50:

	% who would pay.....
£30	93
£40	75
£50	50
£51-£80	13
£81-£100	5
£101-£140	3

Source: Pass Plus Cymru Survey 2015

**Table 4.8: Money people would be prepared to pay for the Pass Plus Cymru course**

<sup>7</sup> ABI (2006) Pass Plus: Ten years on

## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

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- 5.1 At the time of writing, the driving test is 80 years old. Motoring organisations and road safety bodies are calling for an overhaul of the test and licensing procedure, together with the introduction of other reforms, to help save the lives of young people and cut the numbers of serious injuries on the roads. Programmes such as Pass Plus Cymru are designed to address some of the weaknesses of the current system. It must be acknowledged however that if the licensing system was designed to instil safer driving behaviours then the need for post-licence driver training may be less necessary.
- 5.2 The Road Safety Framework for Wales sets out a vision for, “*A continued reduction in the number of people killed and seriously injured on Welsh roads, with the ultimate aspiration of no fatalities.*” It continues: “*We want to establish a focus on results – aligning processes and activities to the delivery of key outcomes (in road safety – casualty reduction). It emphasises the importance of focusing on impact and effectiveness, not how much is being done.*”
- 5.3 The purpose of this evaluation was to specifically assess the impact and effectiveness of Pass Plus Cymru. To do this, wide-ranging research has been undertaken, encompassing statistical analysis, qualitative research, quantitative research and a literature review of best practice. But a central limitation of the work is that there is no pan-Wales data as to whether those involved in KSI statistics have or have not participated in Pass Plus Cymru. Without this data, an *indirect* assessment of the possible impact has been undertaken, using existing collision data, data on uptake, and a literature review on the impact of programmes such as Pass Plus Cymru.
- 5.4 For many years, education has been a common and popular prescription for improving safety in any context. However, being able to demonstrate its *effectiveness* in improving safety is difficult. The literature review has drawn on numerous national studies and the weight of evidence is overwhelmingly in favour of the conclusion that driver education and training has little or no direct effect on the collision risk of new drivers. Because the collision rates of young drivers are higher in the initial post-test period and decline sharply thereafter, gaining driving experience post-test is seen to be the main cause of the reduction of young driver accidents. Of course, this means that young drivers are at continued risk in the immediate post-test period but training and education measures do not seem to have a direct impact on reducing this risk.
- 5.5 However, as is evident from the foregoing analyses, this conclusion is directly at odds with the views expressed by those involved with Pass Plus Cymru either in leading, attending, participating or administering the programme. Clearly, Pass Plus Cymru is well regarded and this conclusion raises the question as to how such contradictory and counter-intuitive findings can arise.

- 5.6** What is different about safety education is that unlike most types of education, where a course is considered successful if the student meets his or her learning objectives, how students then choose to use their learning is considered beyond the responsibility of the course, whereas for a driving programme like Pass Plus Cymru, it is how students are then able to use their learning which matters. The outcome being sought is not satisfaction with the learning, but an expectation of improved subsequent driving behaviour and measurable effects on collisions. Yet collisions have complex causes, some aspects of which are outside the driver's control; and even among high-risk drivers, collisions are rare events, so it is difficult to measure small effects of driver education programmes, in this case, one which reaches just 6% of novice drivers. With such a low level of uptake, even if the programme could be proven to directly reduce collisions, casualties and deaths, it is unlikely that its impact could be measured with any statistical accuracy.
- 5.7** Road safety is not alone in having difficulties demonstrating beneficial bottom-line effects of education; other health and safety fields share this difficulty. Although it is beyond the scope of this study, experts conclude that as well as a major review of the test, other measures need to be considered to improve driver safety if there it to be a real impact on collision statistics.
- 5.8** Whilst this study has sought to prove impact, some stakeholders would argue that in fact the aim of Pass Plus Cymru is to support young people in developing and reinforcing better driving skills and attitudes in the crucial post-test months. It is a way of imparting key Fatal 5 messages to an age group which otherwise rarely seeks opportunities for post-test input. If this were so, then the findings show that young people consider that they have benefitted from both the theory and the workshop. However, despite praise for Pass Plus Cymru amongst those involved, the length of time it has been running and the lack of 'ownership' of the programme locally, particularly in areas where evaluation data is not shared, means that there is scope to improve its administration and review its workings.

## Conclusions

- 5.9** It is not possible to accurately assess the extent of impact, if any, which Pass Plus Cymru has on improving young driver safety. If this is a key prerequisite for deciding whether or not the programme is to continue, then enhanced data systems and partnerships need to be established and developed. If the Welsh Government wishes to prove the impact of Pass Plus Cymru beyond doubt then it will be essential to work with the police and family liaison teams to identify ways of linking KSI statistics with Pass Plus Cymru data. This happens informally in some local authorities already suggesting that improved data collection is a realistic possibility. Undoubtedly if the decision rests on proving a link between Pass Plus Cymru and an increase in young driver safety, then there is the need for the recommended measurement systems in partnership with the police to be implemented.
- 5.10** Even if a definite positive link is established, the low penetration of Pass Plus Cymru needs to be considered. Whilst any reduction in collisions, injuries and fatalities are welcomed, it needs to be assessed whether Pass Plus Cymru is the most effective tool in reaching the volume of young people and the profile of young people whom would most benefit.
- 5.11** With no evidence of any road safety programmes impacting upon collision data, it could be questioned whether the expectations of Pass Plus Cymru surpass its realistic potential. It performs well and is well received as an educational tool, with young people appreciating the opportunity to extend their knowledge beyond what is seen to some as a "tick box" exercise of gaining a driving licence. The desire to be able to "prove" that this then has a direct impact on reducing road collisions could be considered beyond reasonable expectation, although understandably this is identified as its overarching aim.

- 5.12 In the meantime, if it is felt that the positive findings from the softer evaluation of the programme from both young drivers and RSOs is sufficient to support its continuation and build on current practice, then there are certain and clear developments which can improve its effectiveness in its educational impact and reach.
- 5.13 In particular, there is little sense of ownership or leadership of the programme, with some local exceptions – it is simply something that authorities are required to do. Only by gaining regular monitoring information will The Welsh Government be able to evaluate uptake and have sufficient oversight to understand where Pass Plus Cymru is being promoted and delivered effectively.
- 5.14 The research has shown that ADIs are central to awareness and promotion of the programme, but some are unaware of it and some are disaffected.
- 5.15 Road safety budgets are under considerable pressure and without the subsidy it appears unlikely that local authorities would be able to fund Pass Plus Cymru. It was evident from the survey and literature review that Pass Plus Cymru is one of the cheapest schemes for participants and that fees could be raised to £30 without significant impact. The profile of the Road Safety Framework may need raising to ensure a continued focus on the targets at a local level.
- 5.16 Many different concerns were raised about the programme, which stakeholders have not previously articulated despite Pass Plus Cymru being a standard item on Road Safety Wales Policy and Executive Group meetings. Ways of reporting concerns and good practice need to be improved so that the programme can be kept fresh and crucially, maintain the ‘buy in’ from RSOs.
- 5.17 In conclusion, a key question must be posed:
- **Does Pass Plus Cymru need to demonstrate a positive impact on young driver safety?**

If ‘yes’ – there is an urgent need to implement measures to establish whether there is a positive impact. As yet, other studies and the young people’s survey suggest that this is not proven.

If subsequent studies prove an impact, then the Welsh Government may conclude that Pass Plus Cymru should be continued, in which case the focus should be on extending its reach.

If any such exercise does not establish an impact then there is a need to consider whether other educational outcomes are sufficient to continue its provision. If this is the case, then recommendations set out below on improving the programme’s operation should be considered.

## Recommendations

### Strategic considerations

- Review the aim of Pass Plus Cymru to determine actions. To prove the impact of Pass Plus Cymru it will be essential to work with the police and family liaison teams to link KSI statistics with Pass Plus Cymru data. There needs to be a data sharing protocol to link the names of participants with collision data.

- Lobby the UK government for the urgent reform of the driving test with a specific emphasis on the safety of young drivers.
- Young driver collision rates are at least 5 times higher than collision rates for over 25 year olds and it is essential to explore other aspects of the Road Safety Framework, such as examining the case for Graduated Driver Licensing in the context of devolved powers; exploring the use and value of in-car technology; and other interventions to counter-balance the current emphasis on education.

### **Operational considerations**

- Review and refresh Pass Plus Cymru by mapping the syllabus of the workshop element of Pass Plus Cymru against the Goals for Driver Education to assess the scope for improving the fit between the two especially in relation to the risk increasing aspects and self-evaluation. Redesign the format/content of the discussion workshop accordingly. Consider approving a range of materials to be used flexibly.
- Map the known risk factors with the practical syllabus to highlight specific concerns, eg the emphasis on motorway driving and urban driving with the DSA.
- With ADIs (e.g. through local ADI partnerships) explore alternative ways of overcoming the difficulties of delivering Pass Plus Cymru in six individual modules over an extended period to avoid the current practice of one nine hour session.
- Review current monitoring requirements to ensure that data is shared in a regular and timely manner with the Welsh Government. Ensure that participants/ADIs understand the need for effective monitoring.
- Explore more effective ways of sharing best practice through the Road Safety Wales Partnership. Examples such as the ADI Association in Neath Port Talbot and work with employers should be shared and built on.
- Improve ways of reporting concerns and feedback on Pass Plus Cymru to the Road Safety Wales Policy and Executive Group meetings.
- Improve current practice in payment methods, monitoring and follow ups to the level of the best.
- Consider raising the pay of ADIs involved to attract the best. Raising fees from participants by £10 per person appears unlikely to impact on uptake.
- Explore the potential for sponsorship to raise funding levels.

- Quality assure Pass Plus Cymru by developing ADI training (eg Police Driver Training Class 1) and systems for quality assurance purposes, including the potential of the 'mystery shopper' approach.
- Broaden partnership working to include youth engagement teams and young offenders' teams to reach different groups.

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**Appendix 1: Annual rolling average crashes and crash rates (per 1000 licensed drivers) for 17 to 19 year olds, 20 to 24 year olds and 25+ year olds.**

	Year	Numbers			Rates			Rate ratios v 25+ yr driver (95%CI)		
		KSI	Slight	All Crashes	KSI	Slight	All Crashes	KSI	Slight	All Crashes
<b>17 to 19 yr drivers</b>	2008-10	120	879	999	2.7	19.6	22.2	6.5 (5.38 to 7.91)	8.7 (8.12 to 9.40)	8.4 (7.84 to 8.99)
	2009-11	102	729	831	2.4	17.0	19.3	5.9 (4.80 to 7.26)	8.0 (7.43 to 8.71)	7.7 (7.16 to 8.29)
	2010-12	84	605	689	2.1	14.9	17.0	5.4 (4.29 to 6.74)	7.5 (6.87 to 8.16)	7.1 (6.60 to 7.74)
	2011-13	75	533	608	2.0	14.0	15.9	4.9 (3.85 to 6.19)	7.3 (6.63 to 7.95)	6.8 (6.29 to 7.45)
	% change v 2008-10	-37.8%	-39.3%	-39.2%	26.7%	28.6%	-28.4%			
<b>20 to 24 yr drivers</b>	2008-10	208	1261	1469	1.5	9.2	10.7	3.7 (3.17 to 4.31)	4.1 (3.85 to 4.37)	4.0 (3.81 to 4.28)
	2009-11	194	1175	1369	1.4	8.6	10.0	3.5 (3.02 to 4.13)	4.1 (3.80 to 4.33)	4.0 (3.74 to 4.22)
	2010-12	182	1126	1307	1.3	8.3	9.6	3.5 (2.95 to 4.09)	4.1 (3.88 to 4.43)	4.0 (3.80 to 4.29)
	2011-13	187	1047	1233	1.4	8.0	9.4	3.6 (3.02 to 4.17)	4.1 (3.87 to 4.45)	4.0 (3.80 to 4.31)
	% change v 2008-10	-10.1%	-17.0%	-16.0%	-5.8%	13.0%	-12.0%			
<b>25+ yr drivers</b>	2008-10	740	4046	4786	0.4	2.2	2.6			
	2009-11	735	3868	4603	0.4	2.1	2.5			
	2010-12	714	3708	4422	0.4	2.0	2.4			
	2011-13	735	3524	4259	0.4	1.9	2.3			
	% change v 2008-10	-0.7%	-12.9%	-11.0%	-2.0%	14.0%	-12.2%			

Source:- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-accidents-and-safety-statistics>  
 (NB: This table is also included in the body of the report as Table 3.4)

## Appendix 2: Achieved sample from the Young People's Survey 2015

### Gender of participants

Male	39.6%
Female	60.4%

### Age of participants:

17	5.6%
18	27.1%
19	27.4%
20	12.1%
21	4.4%
22	3.2%
23	5.3%
24	6.2%
25	4.4%
Over 25	4.4%

**Note: Those taking part in the survey had participated from January 2013, so some were now older than the 17-25 year old age bracket**

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