



Department for Transport

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6 March 2025

Dear Mr Fleming,

Thank you for your reports of 13 January made under the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013, following the inquests you conducted into the deaths of Joseph Samuel Walsh and Tobias Crowther Barraclough.

I am deeply saddened by the circumstances of Joseph Walsh and Tobias Barraclough's deaths, and I would like to extend my condolences to their families.

I am determined that we learn from tragedies like this and that we take action to reduce those killed and injured on our roads.

I want to assure you that improving road safety is one of my Department's highest priorities. Too many people are killed and seriously injured in road traffic collisions, and this Government will work hard to prevent these tragedies for all road users. My Department is developing our road safety strategy and will set out more details in due course.

Whilst UK roads are among the safest in the world, there is no room for complacency, and I have carefully considered your report and its recommendations.

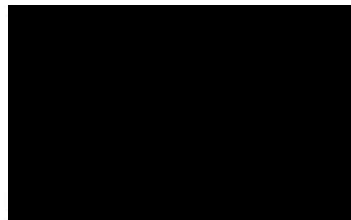
The latest statistics do show that the number of fatalities for car drivers aged 17-24 years-old on Britain's roads is falling - from 448 in 1990 to 90 in 2023, which is an 80% total decrease. However, there is still more to be done because in terms of population and the number of miles driven, 17-24-year-olds, particularly young men, remain one of the highest fatality risk groups both as car drivers and passengers.

Whilst we are not considering Graduated Driving Licences, we absolutely recognise that young people are disproportionately victims of tragic incidents on our roads. As work progresses on the new road safety strategy, we are exploring options to tackle the root causes of this without unfairly penalising young drivers.

I am also aware that drug and alcohol use was a factor in this collision. There are already strict penalties in place for those who are caught driving under the influence of drink or drugs. Nevertheless, we are considering further policy options with regard to motoring offences.

I would like to reiterate that this Government treats road safety with the utmost seriousness, and we are committed to reducing the numbers of those killed and injured on our roads.

Best wishes,



MINISTER FOR THE FUTURE OF ROADS