



**ANDREW HETHERINGTON**  
**HM Senior Coroner for Northumberland**

**County Hall Morpeth Northumberland NE61 2EF**  
**Email** [REDACTED]

Date: 26 March 2026

## **REGULATION 28 REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS**

**THIS REPORT IS BEING SENT TO: Northumberland County Council**

### **1 CORONER**

I am Mr Andrew Hetherington HM Senior Coroner for Northumberland  
**CORONER'S LEGAL POWERS**

- 2 I make this report under paragraph 7, Schedule 5, of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 and regulations 28 and 29 of the Coroners (Investigations) Regulations 2013.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2009/25/schedule/5/paragraph/7>

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1629/part/7/made>

### **INVESTIGATION and INQUEST**

- 3 On 9 September 2024 I commenced an investigation into the deaths of Elizabeth Anne LANG and Katie Alice LANG. The investigation concluded at the end of the inquest on 26 March 2026.

I recorded a conclusion of Road traffic collision.

### **CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DEATH**

On Thursday 5th September 2024 Katie Lang was the front seat passenger with her mother Elizabeth Lang who was driving the motor vehicle.

- 4 The vehicle they were travelling in was approaching southbound from Ashington towards Sheepwash on the A1068 Sheepwash Road, Ashington where the road enters a sweeping bend. The vehicle was observed on entering the bend to lose control resulting in the vehicle rotating in a clockwise direction and crossing the centre line into the northbound carriageway rotating sideways exposing the passenger side then colliding with another vehicle which had insufficient time to avoid the collision. Both Elizabeth and Katie sustained fatal injuries and died at the scene. The road is subject to a national speed limit of 60 miles per hour. There was no evidence of excessive speed or braking, acceleration or deceleration prior to the collision. There were no defects to either vehicle that caused or contributed to the collision. The road conditions were damp and the coefficient of friction of the road was found to be low.

## **CORONER'S CONCERNS**

During the course of the inquest the evidence revealed matters giving rise to concern. In my opinion there is a risk that future deaths will occur unless action is taken. In the circumstances it is my statutory duty to report to you.

The **MATTERS OF CONCERN** are as follows. -

5 (1) During the course of the inquest I heard that Sideway-force Coefficient Investigation Machine testing ("SCRIM" testing) is carried out by the council on an annual basis. Further that the county has responsibility for an extensive road network. SCRIM testing carried out on 18 September 2024 assessed the coefficient of friction as low. I heard that Northumberland County Council has an acceptable level of 0.5. Where the vehicle began to slide the coefficient of friction was 0.22. The deceleration tests identified a coefficient of friction at 0.598g at the initial test site and 0.637g after Bothal Bank.

I heard from the Head of Highways at Northumberland County Council that works were undertaken along the A1068 from Sheepwash Bridge to the junction of the A197 as part of the Council's yearly Local Transport Plan. The works consisted of structural repair to the existing carriageway, a surface dressing treatment and new road markings. The nature of this work is seasonal and weather dependent. The works were completed by 3rd July 2025.

6 I heard evidence from three witnesses who are local to the area and have experience of driving along Sheepwash Road. They described the bend where the collision occurred as notorious with experienced drivers routinely reducing speed when navigating the bend. There is no advance warning signage alerting unfamiliar drivers to the severity of the bend. The Forensic Collision Investigator and the Head of Highways agreed advanced warning signage would be helpful. I heard that Traffic sign regulation standards are governed by the Traffic Signs Regulations General Directions 2016. The absence of advance warning signage may present an ongoing risk to road users, particularly those unfamiliar with the road layout.

### **ACTION SHOULD BE TAKEN**

7 In my opinion action should be taken to prevent future deaths and I believe you Northumberland County Council have the power to take such action.

### **YOUR RESPONSE**

You are under a duty to respond to this report within 56 days of the date of this report, namely by 21 May 2026. I, the coroner, may extend the period.

8 Your response must contain details of action taken or proposed to be taken, setting out the timetable for action. Otherwise you must explain why no action is proposed.

### **COPIES and PUBLICATION**

I have sent a copy of my report to the Chief Coroner and to the following Interested Persons - the family of Elizabeth and Katie.

I am also under a duty to send the Chief Coroner a copy of your response.

The Chief Coroner may publish either or both in a complete or redacted or summary form. She may send a copy of this report to any person who she believes may find it useful or of interest. You may make representations to me, the coroner, at the time of your response, about the release or the publication of your response by the Chief Coroner.

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Signature [REDACTED]

Andrew Hetherington HM Senior Coroner for Northumberland