



Making Roads Safer

University of Keele – Mobile: Engaged

Road Safety Trust
Funding Showcase



The Road Safety Trust is dedicated to making the UK's roads the safest in the world. As an independent grant-giving charity, the Road Safety Trust funds vital research and practical interventions committed to reducing the number of people killed or injured on our roads.

In 2019, the University of Keele completed a project to share and improve practice in preventing mobile phone use while driving, using a grant of £75k from the Road Safety Trust.

Use of a hand-held mobile phone whilst driving was banned in 2003 and further penalties were introduced in 2007 and 2017. Hands-free use remains legal, and encourages drivers to believe (incorrectly) that it is safer than hand-held use. In fact, the two methods of phone use are very similar in the amount of distraction that they cause. Efforts to reduce distracted driving therefore need to focus on educating drivers to make safe choices, not just legal ones.



In any case, relying on the law (and enforcement) to regulate phone use is difficult when the pace of technological development is faster than the process of developing legislation. It is much less clear now than it was in 2003 what a 'phone'



actually is, and many activities that could not be imagined in 2003 are now perfectly possible with what are essentially personal computers in our pockets.

The University of Keele's Mobile: Engaged project sought to engage with innovators and innovations in preventing mobile phone use while driving, with the aim of reducing the number of people being distracted whilst driving.

Firstly, the University of Keele embarked on a series of Knowledge Exchange Consultations to share and improve the practices that already existed in tackling mobile phone use by drivers. A range of innovations were already being implemented and by bringing together academics and practitioners further advancements could be made.

The output of the project was a 160-page compendium aimed at road safety and roads policing professionals to help them in their efforts to reduce the use of mobile phones behind the wheel. The compendium contains research, tools, best practice and case studies informed by the Knowledge Exchange Consultations and wider research.

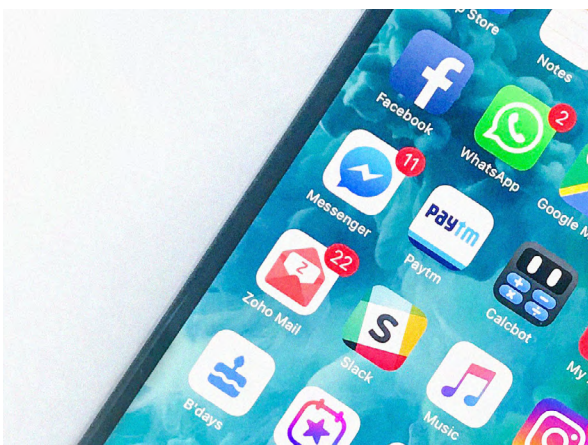
The compendium was launched by Drs Helen Wells and Leanne Savigar from the University of Keele at an event in March 2019. It was attended by over 50 road safety and roads policing professionals.

An additional £9.5k funding was awarded to University of Keele by the Road Safety Trust in 2019 for further amplification of the project. This included updating the compendium, hosting an interdisciplinary roundtable event and a resource pack for the National Police Chiefs Council's 2020 mobile phone enforcement campaign.

The National Police Chiefs Council co-ordinates campaigns for all police forces and the University of Keele were invited to support the annual mobile phone campaign. The Mobile: Engaged team created a resource pack including; guidance on messaging around mobile phone usage, social media content, an FAQ document, press releases and suggested images. This was delivered directly to all 43 police forces and roads policing partners. This resulted in 250,000 tweet impressions and positive feedback.



A copy of the compendium is available at <https://joom.ag/vtcC>





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The Road Safety Trust

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