

**Momentum Project
Evaluation**

The Momentum Project

An evaluation of the Momentum Project
as run by the
Lewis and Harris Youth Clubs Association

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Introduction

It is abundantly clear that the greatest risk of accidental injury or death to young people in Scotland aged between 17 and 25 comes from their use of our roads. This is particularly sad since almost every incident could have been avoided had the persons involved made different choices. Much work has been done to identify methods of communicating effectively with this age group and trying to find a way to deliver the knowledge and skills they need to survive on the road in a way that they can understand and respect.

During the first six months of 2008 the author was employed by the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) in the post of Road Safety Manager, Scotland. In the latter part of that period he met some of the people involved with running the Momentum Project in the Eilean Siar (Western Isles), delivering a message of safe and informed road use to the next generation of young drivers.

The Momentum Project is a template for delivery of road safety education and preparation for driving to young people over the age of 14. It was originally developed by the organisation UK Youth and the training material's copyright is held by Youth Clubs UK.

The author was impressed both by the clear commitment evident in the group he met in the Eilean Siar to road safety through education and with the results that had been achieved. Prior to leaving his post with RoSPA to emigrate to the USA he undertook to carry out a basic evaluation of the work of the project.

This report is the result of that exercise and is produced for the information of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and the Lewis and Harris Association of Youth Clubs. The author waives copyright of the material for education or road safety purposes.

The scope and limitations of the work

This evaluation takes the form of a report on the information gained from a questionnaire circulated to participants in the Momentum Project and those involved in its delivery. Some 200 questionnaires were circulated and 50 were returned. The very subjective information obtained is placed in context by reference to the objective collision and casualty statistics obtained by reference to the Scottish Government publication "Road Casualties Scotland" (the most recent statistics are for 2007 and may be accessed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Transport-Travel/pubroadacc>)

Due to circumstances beyond his control the author has been unable to research this evaluation as thoroughly as he would have wished. In particular it would have been useful to have benchmarked the commitment of time and public money expended on the Momentum Project against the cost of doing nothing and also against the cost of alternative education measures. In essence, the process of establishing the views of those involved with the project is not validated through comparison with a 'control sample' from other areas and as such it is inappropriate to draw firm conclusions from the indicative findings.

Executive summary

The author is of the opinion that the volunteer workers who deliver the Momentum Project in the Eilean Siar play a significant role in developing positive attitudes and practical skills which allow the young people who attend to be better equipped to deal with the challenges of driving safely. This is supported by statistics which show that the area is performing well in reducing road death and injury and also the feedback from young people who have participated. There are of course many factors that contribute to the reduction in road

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accidents and casualties, including technical improvements to roads and vehicles, the enforcement of traffic laws and widespread road safety education. Nonetheless, the Momentum Project can be seen as a very useful component with a number of strengths and weaknesses.

The major strength is the credibility of the message of safe and responsible road use that is delivered to the young people involved. They clearly have an enhanced level of knowledge and skills resulting from the various inputs. They also enjoy a 'fringe benefit' through the close contact and informal communication with those presenting the course that allows them the opportunity to meet and talk with representatives of the police, fire and ambulance services. It is difficult to quantify what effect this has on the participant's sense of community and belonging but it must be significant.

The major weaknesses of this (or any similar exercise) are threefold and closely related:

1. The success of the enterprise is dependent on the availability of volunteers who have the knowledge, credibility and enthusiasm to consistently deliver the programme. Those currently involved with the Project have these qualities in abundance but, being driven by individual personalities, it is difficult to replicate on a wider scale and is very vulnerable to one or two key parties becoming unable to continue their commitment.
2. Providing a quality experience for the participants is expensive in terms of both time and resources and there is increasing competition for funds whether public or private.
3. By its very nature the benefits of the project are restricted to a relatively small number of participants. If the programme content and style of delivery are recognised as good practice then, logically, they should be much more widely available.

That said, it is the opinion of the author that the Momentum Project as operated in the Eilean Siar represents a very good example of driver education in the style of that delivered in parts of the USA. As such it may be considered a model worthy of further study with a view to including at least parts of its syllabus in mainstream education and training. This would be consistent with the direction that seems to be developing in the Scottish Government's Road Safety Framework to 2020.

Background

The statistics for road accidents in Scotland for 2007 show a continuing and very welcome decline in the number of injury accidents reported. In fact, the number of people killed on Scotland's roads in that year was the lowest (at 281) since records began more than 50 years ago. This is echoed by the figures for all injuries whether serious or slight and defies attribution to any single cause. It seems most likely that improvements in the education, training and testing of drivers and riders, combined with improvements to vehicle and road design together with advances in medical technology, have all contributed to promote this sustained decline.

As can be seen from the attached tables 1 and 2, the general downward trend is also evident in the Eilean Siar although any statistician would point out that the overall numbers involved are relatively small and could easily be subject to a single serious incident having a disproportionately large effect. What is, however, clear is that the efforts of all involved with delivering safer roads for residents and visitors is contributing to a continuing success story.

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Table 1: Accidents by police force area, council and severity, 94-98, 03-07 averages and 2007

Police force Council	1994-98 average			2007 (provisional)			2003-2007 average (provisional)		
	Fatal	Fatal & Serious	All	Fatal	Fatal & Serious	All	Fatal	Fatal & Serious	All
Northern	34	300	877	34	169	738	29	191	774
Highland	25	246	720	30	149	626	24	162	652
Orkney Islands	2	14	38	-	2	27	1	7	35
Shetland Islands	3	18	56	4	8	41	2	8	40
Eilean Siar	3	21	63	-	10	44	2	13	47
Grampian	44	324	1,493	35	255	1,151	45	248	1,115
Aberdeen City	9	102	603	5	65	375	6	68	384
Aberdeenshire	27	171	681	24	152	612	33	143	565
Moray	8	52	208	6	38	164	6	37	165
Tayside	32	417	1,304	30	235	927	28	268	1,009
Dundee City	5	114	420	2	53	253	3	64	299
Angus	8	118	366	13	68	282	10	78	291
Perth & Kinross	19	185	518	15	114	392	15	126	419
Fife	18	209	766	10	130	606	16	160	691
Lothian & Borders	53	538	3,442	44	424	2,510	39	420	2,757
Edinburgh, City of	17	267	1,995	5	188	1,330	9	180	1,439
West Lothian	12	95	521	11	68	424	9	72	466
Midlothian	4	45	254	4	46	210	3	39	230
East Lothian	5	44	237	5	37	210	5	37	211
Scottish Borders	15	87	435	15	85	336	13	92	410
Central	18	244	792	8	130	675	16	163	695
Clackmannanshire	2	38	108	1	12	88	2	19	93
Stirling	9	114	320	5	63	290	8	78	292
Falkirk	7	93	364	2	55	297	6	66	310
Strathclyde	119	1,814	7,401	87	807	5,359	94	971	5,845
Glasgow, City of	25	527	2,464	14	250	1,784	18	286	1,955
Argyll & Bute	12	132	355	13	53	268	11	83	303
West Dunbartonshire	6	71	294	2	28	202	4	38	226
East	2	57	255	3	23	149	2	29	180

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Dunbartonshire									
Inverclyde	2	61	309	3	30	206	2	32	199
Renfrewshire	9	137	574	6	55	424	7	76	473
East Renfrewshire	5	48	203	4	17	118	2	22	140
North Lanarkshire	18	241	953	10	111	754	11	112	774
South Lanarkshire	17	223	945	12	113	688	15	120	746
North Ayrshire	5	109	380	6	45	265	6	61	305
East Ayrshire	11	111	344	6	34	239	7	55	267
South Ayrshire	5	99	328	8	48	262	7	56	277
Dumfries & Galloway	18	157	433	11	144	475	12	119	460
Scotland	335	4,003	16,508	256	2,237	12,441	279	2,541	13,346

Table 2: Casualties by police force area, council and severity, 94-98, 03-07 averages and 2007

Police force Council	1994-98 average			2007 (provisional)			2003-2007 average (provisional)		
	Killed	Killed & Serious	All	Killed	Killed & Serious	All	Killed	Killed & Serious	All
Northern	38	412	1,353	39	211	1,076	33	240	1,151
Highland	29	342	1,125	34	187	929	27	206	980
Orkney Islands	2	17	52	-	2	37	1	8	47
Shetland Islands	3	24	82	5	11	51	2	10	56
Eilean Siar	3	29	94	-	11	59	3	16	69
Grampian	50	395	1,971	37	299	1,482	49	310	1,497
Aberdeen City	9	112	716	5	69	449	6	76	463
Aberdeenshire	30	215	959	25	187	821	36	186	798
Moray	11	69	296	7	43	212	7	48	236
Tayside	36	508	1,772	35	269	1,206	31	318	1,337
Dundee City	5	124	515	2	54	312	3	69	368
Angus	9	149	508	13	84	389	11	95	399
Perth & Kinross	21	236	749	20	131	505	18	155	570
Fife	21	267	1,065	14	151	780	19	192	926
Lothian & Borders	61	635	4,453	41	469	3,175	40	474	3,531
Edinburgh, City of	18	290	2,392	5	196	1,596	9	192	1,716
West Lothian	14	122	763	11	82	599	9	84	656

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Midlothian	4	55	354	4	51	264	4	46	308
East Lothian	7	55	316	5	40	261	5	42	275
Scottish Borders	18	115	627	16	100	455	13	110	577
Central	20	290	1,073	8	152	894	17	198	944
Clackmannanshire	2	42	137	1	12	111	3	25	125
Stirling	10	142	454	5	77	393	9	98	408
Falkirk	8	106	482	2	63	390	6	76	411
Strathclyde	131	2,117	10,006	95	942	6,956	101	1,111	7,711
Glasgow, City of	27	570	3,107	14	262	2,175	18	305	2,450
Argyll & Bute	13	175	556	14	70	373	12	102	435
West Dunbartonshire	7	85	404	2	31	252	4	43	297
East Dunbartonshire	2	67	354	3	28	189	2	32	234
Inverclyde	2	70	405	3	37	266	3	38	268
Renfrewshire	11	157	758	7	66	550	7	85	616
East Renfrewshire	6	58	272	4	20	148	3	28	180
North Lanarkshire	19	276	1,313	12	133	1,020	12	128	1,064
South Lanarkshire	20	264	1,327	14	138	946	16	141	1,006
North Ayrshire	6	133	540	6	55	360	7	74	415
East Ayrshire	12	140	500	7	41	323	8	66	358
South Ayrshire	6	120	469	9	61	354	9	69	388
Dumfries & Galloway	22	214	623	12	170	644	14	142	627
Scotland	378	4,838	22,316	281	2,663	16,213	305	2,985	17,724

(Source - <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Transport-Travel/pubroadacc>)

Every target set by the Government for achievement by 2010 has already been exceeded and the eyes of those involved with road safety are firmly on establishing what new targets would be appropriate. This work finds its focus in the Scottish Government push to establish a new Road Safety Framework due for publication in June 2009. A public consultation process was held to inform development of the framework and many of those contributing drew attention to the disproportionate numbers of young people involved in the most serious incidents and the frequency of their occurrence on rural or country roads. The following quotes are representative of the sentiments expressed:

“The statistics are clear – young drivers are overrepresented in fatal and serious crashes. But, the majority of young drivers survive their early months and years relatively unscathed and go on to be the drivers of the future. Any measures put forward by government must encourage safer driving and the acquisition of relevant skills and experience and not simply make driving less accessible. Young men are

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clearly the greatest danger to themselves, their passengers and other road users and must be the main focus of education and training programmes.”

“The Scottish Government has an ideal opportunity to work across departments to deliver coordinated road safety programmes. Research suggests that bad attitudes are set well before young men can legally get behind the wheel of a car. Identifying those individuals most likely to display anti-social driving behaviour is the ideal way forward. Putting in place programmes to rectify these behavioural traits can then take place in schools as early as 1st and 2nd year at the secondary level.”

(Stewart Stevenson MSP, Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change – opening address at the RoSPA Road Safety Congress, Glasgow, February 2008)

“Reducing casualties involving young drivers is a key priority, but engaging effectively with this group presents a particular challenge. One in five new drivers is likely to be involved in an accident within 1 year of passing their test. Inexperience, combined with conscious and unconscious risk taking behaviour, is largely responsible for these accidents.” (IAM Motoring Trust response to the Scottish Government Road Safety Strategy consultation – 2008)

“Worrying attitudes towards road safety among some young people have been revealed in new Scottish Government reports.

“The latest research, commissioned to help inform the development of a new Road Safety Framework for Scotland, explored the views of young people aged 16 to 25. A further study was also undertaken on rural road safety.

“The research revealed:

- ***Driving at speed was seen to be a source of enjoyment by some young drivers***
- ***Some young drivers are prepared to take risks with speed on rural roads, testing their driving skills in an environment where there is seen to be lower risk due to fewer vehicles and pedestrians***
- ***Young people were unsure about the legal limit for drinking and driving. Many had examples of travelling in a car with a driver who had been drinking, or of friends driving while over the limit***
- ***Young people rarely thought that an accident would ever happen to them***
- ***Young people put themselves at risk through inappropriate levels of trust in friends as drivers”***

(Scottish Government press release, December 2008, relating to focus group work carried out with young people throughout Scotland during 2008.)

The Momentum Project in the Eilean Siar:

The Momentum Project as delivered in this area endeavours to address the attitudinal aspects of driving together with some of the practical areas of actually making a car move around. The work is delivered primarily by volunteers from the Lewis and Harris Association of Youth Clubs, the Police, Fire Brigade and Ambulance Services and the local authority. Two courses are run each year with each course being run over two days – usually a Friday into Saturday – with one night being residential. Up to 25 young people attend each event and they are usually over subscribed.

Within the basic Momentum concept three main themes are addressed, “Under the bonnet”, “Behind the wheel” and “In the mind”. These are covered through an informal approach that,

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from the outset, gives the young people involved a sense of ownership of the project and their involvement. Workshops are arranged to allow for hands on experience of driving (cars and go karts) and basic maintenance issues together with more philosophical matters such as the impact of road crashes on the people involved, their friends and family.

The attitudinal aspect of the course appears to be a valued component and is facilitated by referring to real incidents reported in the press together with discussions of similar events with ambulance, police and fire brigade personnel. Such an approach is clearly labour intensive with the relatively small number of participants resulting in a low student to instructor ratio. It does however allow for a high quality interaction where all present can feel involved and can participate.

No charge is made for the young people who attend the course and - until 2009 – it has been subsidised by the local authority whose contribution pays for the use of accommodation, vehicles, fuel and the services of professional driving instructors. There is also a large 'hidden' cost in the form of time given by volunteers from the emergency services and representatives of the Youth Clubs Association.

There are echoes of the Momentum concept in the Driver Education Programme run in the state of Wisconsin in the USA. In this area young people can obtain a driving licence at age 16 – however, prior to even being allowed to undertake instruction from parents or friends they must complete a Driver Education Programme. An example of this is as follows (Excerpt from a non-governmental information site):

“In order to be issued your instruction permit, you must be enrolled in a certified driver education course. This can be a course offered through your school, a private training facility, or other authorised teaching facility.

Driver's Education Class

In order to be considered certified driver's education, the course must contain at least 30 hours of classroom instruction over a three week period, and must include six hours of actual driving and six hours observing another driver. The Wisconsin DMV offers a comprehensive listing of commercial driver education schools.

Driver's Education Lessons

The requirements for drivers education includes the basic rules of the road, the mechanics and operation of a motor vehicle, how to control and operate a motor vehicle, emergency preparedness, sign identification, and motor vehicle laws.

Additional topics covered in the driver's education classroom include:

- *Traffic Laws*
- *Severe weather driving*
- *Driving on the freeway*
- *Driver safety*
- *Defensive driving basics*
- *Driving skills*
- *Identification of road signs*
- *Vehicle control*
- *Lane changes*
- *Driving in an urban setting*
- *Driving in a rural setting*

(<http://www.dmv.org/wi-wisconsin/drivers-ed.php> accessed January 2009)

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The Momentum programme is remarkably similar covering areas such as:

- Highway Code, traffic laws
- Hazard perception
- Vehicle maintenance
- The effects of drink/drugs (beer goggles!)
- The effects of peer pressure
- Driving experience (off road since many participants are too young to hold a licence)
- Discussion groups – drivers responsibilities, the consequences of inappropriate behaviour
- Specialist input – driving instructor/emergency services/vehicle mechanic

All of these can be seen to contribute toward providing the participants with the opportunity to develop positive attitudes to road use amongst their peer group. Traditionally this has been one of the most challenging aspects of dealing with young people and it is an area where the Momentum concept seems to excel.

The survey questionnaire:

In order to attempt to gain a view of the participant's experiences of the Momentum Project the author prepared the questionnaire that appears at Appendix 1. This was circulated to many of the recent participants and other interested parties by Mr MacArthur, Chair of the Lewis and Harris Youth Clubs Association and the results obtained are as follows:

1. **I have been involved with the Momentum Project as:**

(delete those inapplicable)

- a. A participant
- b. A volunteer assistant
- c. A road safety professional
- d. Other
- e. Not involved at all

44 Participants returned the surveys, 3 volunteer assistants, 2 road safety professionals and one who had had no experience of the project. **The responses to the questionnaire are recorded only in respect of 'participants'.**

2. **My age is:**

- a. 15 – 19
- b. 19 –23
- c. over 23

26 were aged 15 -19 years and 18 were aged 19 – 23 years.

3. **My driving experience is:**

- a. Not yet old enough to drive
- b. Learner driver
- c. Licence holder less than 3 years
- d. Licence holder more than 3 years

6 were not yet old enough to drive, 9 were learner drivers and 29 had held their licence for less than 3 years.

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1. Please number the following road safety risks in the order you think as being most relevant in terms of accident causation with '1' being the most significant and '13' being the least:

1. Peer pressure to show off
2. Poor road conditions
3. Defective vehicles
4. Animals on the road
5. Inexperience
6. Unfamiliarity with the vehicle
7. Drink driving
8. Driving under the influence of drugs (legal or illegal)
9. Driving whilst tired
10. Driving too fast for the conditions
11. Poor weather conditions
12. In car distractions (mobile phones/sound systems/satellite navigation etc)
13. Other (please state)

Category from list	Number who ranked it as most significant		Number who ranked it as least significant	
	Drivers/learners	Not yet old enough to drive	Drivers/learners	Not yet old enough to drive
1	6	1	1	
2	2		2	
3	1		4	2
4			7	
5	2	1		
6	1		5	2
7	15	4		
8	6			
9	1		1	
10	4		1	
11			4	2
12			13	
13				

This response suggests that the majority of participants have concluded that driving under the influence of drink or drugs is the most significant causation factor for crashes. A significant number also identify peer pressure as playing a part. An interesting outcome is that less than 10% considered inappropriate speed to be the most significant issue – this may be worthy of some further activity during the next project session. The spread of responses suggests that the participants are applying their own knowledge and experience to the information provided by the staff to make an independent assessment of risk. As previously stated, however, the overall numbers are too small to provide sustainable conclusions and must therefore be regarded as indicative rather than absolute.

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2. "I think that passing the driving test indicates I am/was/will be fully prepared for the challenges posed by driving." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Agree strongly	7
Agree	15
Not sure	1
Disagree	18
Disagree Strongly	3

These responses indicate an almost 50/50 split between those who feel that the driving test is a good measure of preparedness for driving and those who do not. This is an area where some further work could be done to reinforce a lifelong learning message. One of the main criticisms of the current testing regime is that it encourages training to 'pass the test' rather than tackling a wider agenda. This was identified during the recent DSA consultation process and will hopefully be addressed at a national level in the near future.

3. "I am confident that I can deal effectively with driving anywhere in the UK" (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Agree strongly	2
Agree	18
Not sure	11
Disagree	11
Disagree Strongly	2

These responses suggest that the majority of participants recognise that driving experience and training in an environment with little in the way of built up areas and no motorways may leave them unprepared for the challenges of driving elsewhere in the UK. They are not alone in this regard since the same issues could arise in many rural areas and it may be that revised driver training recommendations could begin to address the situation. The most important thing may, however, be considered to be that they at least realise there are driving

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situations they cannot encounter without travelling and when that happens they may be more cautious and approach the circumstances with a positive, learning attitude.

4. What do you consider to be the emotion that has the most negative affect on your driving ability? Please list in order with 1 being the most negative and 5 the least.

- Anger
- Impatience
- Frustration
- Happiness
- Sadness

The responses to this question showed a 50/50 split between anger and frustration with only 6 choosing an alternative as the most negative emotion. This is an encouraging aspect of participation in the Project since the awareness of negative emotions and the effect they can have upon a task like driving is the first step toward managing them effectively.

5 "I consider it important to have a good understanding of basic vehicle condition and maintenance." (tyre condition, brakes, steering, lights etc) (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Agree strongly	20
Agree	18
Not sure	6
Disagree	0
Disagree Strongly	0

It seems clear from these responses that the Project has given the young people an understanding of the importance of good vehicle maintenance.

6. What car (or type of car) would you own at the moment if you had a free choice. Choose one please.

- Subaru WRX
- Volkswagen Polo
- Landrover Discovery (Diesel)
- Smart Car
- Toyota Avensis

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Subaru WRX	22
Volkswagen Polo	13
Landrover Discovery (Diesel)	3
Smart Car	4
Toyota Avensis	2

These responses could be viewed as indicative of the prevalent attitude amongst young people that style and high performance are desirable traits to aspire to have in their vehicle. There is nothing wrong with wanting to own and use a high performance car – one important thing that the Project generates is the beginning of understanding regarding the responsible enjoyment of such a vehicle.

As stated previously, the absence of a control sample makes it inappropriate to draw any conclusions that are specific to the Eilean Siar and that is particularly true in regard to this question. The author suspects that putting the same question to a similar grouping of young people anywhere in the country would produce similar results. It does however reinforce that the desire to own a high performance vehicle is strong among many youngsters and whatever vehicle they may ultimately be able to afford there is a good possibility that they will use it in a manner associated with the high power vehicle of their aspirations.

7. For you personally - what is the most persuasive argument to discourage risk taking on the roads? Please order from 1 as the most persuasive to 6 as the least.

- Awareness of the danger involved
- Awareness of the personal consequences (death or serious injury)
- Awareness of the personal consequences (loss of vehicle/licence/employment etc)
- Awareness of consequences for others (injury to friends/other road users etc)
- Awareness of consequences for others (parents/relatives/ friends who would be affected by your death or injury)
- Other – please state

The responses to this question showed that the most persuasive argument against risk taking on the road was considered to be an awareness of the potential consequences – either personally or to friends and family. Only 3 respondents identified the danger involved as a significant factor with 19 citing the consequences for friends and family and the remaining 22 selecting awareness of the personal consequences. The author suspects that this level of awareness of the consequences of risk taking is not common amongst this age group around the country and that it can be attributed directly to input and facilitated discussions during the Project.

8. Have you frightened yourself - through your own actions - whilst driving? (Choose one please)

- Never
- Once
- More than once
- Regularly

Never	12
Once	17
More than once	15
Regularly	0

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On the assumption that each incident of being 'frightened' by their own actions represents an accident avoided it would seem that these responses indicate in excess of 32 'near misses' with this small group alone. This serves to reinforce the importance of effective training and credible education in safe and responsible road use.

9. "I am fully aware of the legal limits and penalties attached to drinking and driving."
(Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Agree strongly	25
Agree	18
Not sure Disagree	1
Disagree Strongly	0

10. "I am fully aware of the legal limits and penalties attached to drug driving." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Agree strongly	20
Agree	22
Not sure	1
Disagree	1
Disagree Strongly	

The responses to questions 9 and 10 illustrate that the vast majority of the group consider themselves to be aware of the law relating to drinking, drugs and driving. This topic is covered during the project and it seems to have provided effective education.

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11. Statistically the most 'at risk' age group of drivers in Scotland is? (choose one please)

- 17 – 25
- 25 - 30
- 30 – 40
- 40 – 45
- 45 – 50
- 50 –55
- over 55

Every participant correctly identified that the age group 17 – 25 years (their own!) is statistically the most at risk on the roads.

12. Statistically, the most dangerous roads in Scotland are? (choose one please)

- Motorways
- Roads outside schools
- Country roads
- Roads in city centres

Motorways	12
Roads outside schools	2
Country Roads	27
Roads in city centres	3

The author acknowledges that there could be considerable debate over the definitions attached to 'dangerous' and to 'country roads' but the language was chosen deliberately to be accessible to the target group. The responses indicate that the majority recognise the dangers associated with travel on Scotland's country or rural road network. This is especially important in the Eilean Siar since the majority of their roads fall into this category. The misapprehension regarding the safety of motorway travel is something that could be further addressed through the Project.

13. "If I were being driven by someone who was driving in a risky way I would ask them to stop that behaviour." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

Agree strongly	19
Agree	17
Not sure	5
Disagree	3
Disagree Strongly	0

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This important area is covered in the Project and addresses the difficulties of peer pressure. It is encouraging that so many feel they would be able to challenge risky behaviour on the part of the person who is driving them even although the question presupposes they would be able to recognise it as such. If all that the Project achieved were to give young people the confidence to challenge risk taking (either their own or that of another person) then it could be argued it had delivered a crucial message.

14. "As a passenger I have been frightened by someone's driving." (choose one please)

- Never
- Once or twice
- Frequently

Never	3
Once or twice	21
Frequently	20

The author acknowledges that this question is open to interpretation. His intention was to ascertain how many respondents had been frightened by the manner in which they were being driven by someone else but the wording could be taken to include any other vehicle on the road. As it stands it is still valid – and worrying – to be able to conclude that almost every respondent has been frightened more than once by the manner of someone else's driving. The level of this fright is not explored nor are the circumstances that produced it but it links well with the need to develop confidence in identifying and appropriately challenging risky behaviour.

15. "As a road user I have seen examples of bad driving." (choose one please)

- Never
- Once or twice
- Frequently

Never	0
Once or twice	18
Frequently	26

The importance of this aspect is that every one of the respondents considered they had witnessed examples of what they considered to be 'bad driving'. The majority regard it as a frequent occurrence! In order to make this judgement they must have a clear idea of what constitutes bad driving and for many this will have been reinforced by their experience as participants in the Project. It is reasonable to hope that the ability to identify 'bad driving' may be associated with a desire not to emulate it.

16. "For me personally holding a driving licence is important because:" (please list in order of importance with 1 being the most important)

- I need it to get to and from work
- I need it to visit friends and family
- I travel to places that are hard to reach by public transport
- I like driving

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Option	Number selecting as first choice
I need it to get to and from work	17
I need it to visit friends and family	2
I travel to places that are hard to reach by public transport	9
I like driving	16

The responses to this question illustrate a spread of reasons for holding a licence – the majority cite a practical rationale but a significant number identify the enjoyment of driving as their most important motivation. It seems to make an important point – namely that the risks and responsibilities associated with driving should be acknowledged alongside the evident truth that for many people the ability to drive gives them pleasure. This is one of the strengths of the Project; it creates an atmosphere that encourages discussion and debate, identifies issues and addresses them, highlights risks, dangers and consequences yet still manages to keep sight of the fact that driving can be enjoyable.

17. "I think that possessing a driving licence is;" (choose one please)

- A right as a citizen of this country
- A privilege that should be earned

Every respondent considered that the possession of a driving licence is a privilege that should be earned.

It is interesting to note that despite the questions being phrased differently the findings of this survey echo those of the study carried out under the auspices of the Scottish Government to inform the development of Scotland's Road Safety Framework.

This research explored the views of young people aged 16 to 25 towards road safety. It involved six focus groups - four with young men and two with young women. The groups were held in Glasgow and Scottish Borders. Some of the key findings are reproduced below with the paragraph numbering from the original report:

"Attitudes and experiences

6.3 **Drivers rarely thought of the risks to themselves** - either of being in an accident or getting caught driving dangerously. **They focused strongly on risks for passengers and other road users.** The young men and women had very high levels of trust in their friends as drivers.

6.4 **Participants were very unsure about what the legal limit for drinking and driving was.** Only one participant said that he had definitely driven while over the limit, but others gave examples that demonstrated that they probably had driven over the limit without realising it. Participants were much more likely to travel with a drink driver if they too had been drinking, and were much more likely to travel with a close friend who had been drinking, rather than a friend of a friend or stranger.

6.5 Driving under the influence of drugs was generally seen as unacceptable - with the exception of prescription drugs. But cannabis was much more common and acceptable than other drugs like speed and cocaine.

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6.6 Participants felt that speeding was very common and acceptable, particularly on quiet roads and motorways. Most participants said that they wore seatbelts all the time, although some did not always wear them - particularly in the back seat. A very small minority of participants had personal experience of driving illegally - in stolen cars, without a licence, and uninsured.

Influences on behaviour

6.7 The focus groups explored what influences behaviour as a passenger and driver, and how participants would respond to a range of potentially dangerous situations. There was no clear consensus on the main influences on behaviour as a driver or passenger. Some of the key factors identified included friends, peer pressure, risk of getting caught, music, other drivers, weather and parents. Drugs and alcohol were also seen as having a clear impact on driving behaviour.

6.8 Having friends in the car encouraged many drivers to show off, even though this had earlier been identified as poor driving behaviour. This contradicted earlier discussions where most participants said that they would not drive dangerously as they would not want to put their friends at risk. Parents only influenced behaviour when physically in the car - generally encouraging safer and more responsible driving, and promoting use of seatbelts.

6.9 Participants had their own limits of acceptable driving behaviour, beyond which they would intervene. These often fluctuated, but participants were most likely to intervene if:

- their friend was in what they perceived to be a particularly dangerous situation (generally involving drink driving);
- it was a close and trusted friend; or
- they could offer a practical solution.

6.10 Speeding was an issue that the participants found difficult to address (when travelling as a passenger), as they could not offer a practical solution and their only option was to say something to the driver. Participants felt that as passengers it was sometimes difficult to influence driver behaviour, and simply saying something did not always have an impact.

Rights and responsibilities

6.11 The focus groups explored young peoples' views towards rights and responsibilities as a driver and passenger. Participants were asked to consider a series of statements about rights and responsibilities, and discuss their views on these. Overall, participants strongly resisted suggestions of greater restrictions on younger drivers. They argued that these would be discriminatory and restrictive, and were not sure why young drivers - and not all new drivers - should be targeted. There was particularly strong resistance to measures which restrict how young people are able to use their cars, including limits on driving at night or carrying passengers. But participants did spontaneously suggest some potential measures to increase the safety of **new** drivers, including making Pass Plus mandatory or part of the driving test.

6.12 Participants felt that the Government had a responsibility for setting limits for safe driving behaviour and ensuring the physical condition of the roads. But this responsibility was shared by drivers and passengers who must adhere to the rules.

Emerging Themes

6.13 The study identified a number of key themes in young people's views on making the roads safer. These are set out in detail as follows:

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- **Changing and flexible opinions** - Many participants changed their minds and contradicted themselves throughout the group - particularly the 16 to 19 year olds.
- **Lack of awareness** - Many participants simply did not know that young people are more at risk of involvement in a road accident. There also appears to be a prevalent attitude that serious accident and injury is something which happens to other people. In the future, it will be important to raise young people's awareness of the reality that young drivers are more likely to be involved in car accidents.
- **Trust in the driver** - Participants had very strong beliefs that if their friend was driving them somewhere, the friend would take great care not to put them in a risky or dangerous situation. But this level of trust is often misplaced - with many examples of friends driving while over the limit, speeding and so on. This high level of trust appears to result in young people being put in more risky situations with close friends than with those they know less well. Issues surrounding friendship and trust could be key areas for future road safety activity with this age group.
- **Strong resistance to laws based on age** - There was a very strong resistance from almost everyone about any rules which are stricter for young drivers than older ones. But, there was much more acceptance of stricter rules based on driving experience. There was widespread recognition that drivers generally get better and safer with more experience.
- **Previous experiences** - Many participants mentioned that being involved in an accident had a big impact on the way they drove. Most felt that it made them a better and more careful driver. But, it appears that hearing about accidents that others have been involved in does not have such a major impact.
- **Minority of more extreme experiences** - In speaking to 54 young participants, we found two participants (friends) with experience of stealing cars, driving without a licence, taking drugs and driving, and driving uninsured. This appears to be related to the neighbourhood the young people live in, and the culture of driving behaviour that exists there."

(<http://openscotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/12/11153232/8> accessed January 2009)

The areas highlighted are those that are *already* being addressed by the Momentum Project and which seem to be producing positive results.

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Conclusion:

"Too many people are still dying on Scotland's roads and sadly, young drivers continue to be over-represented in these deaths.

As a Government, we are constantly looking at new ways to reach this age group and I am determined that we look beyond the traditional and towards the innovative in our efforts to save lives."

(Stewart Stevenson MSP 25th July 2008)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2008/07/24154729/Q/video/481> (accessed May 2009)

That comment from the Minister for Transport concisely states the problem and also defines the imperative to work toward finding a solution. The 'Momentum Project' as operated in the Eilean Siar is a good example of enthusiastic volunteers creating a valuable learning experience for young road users. It is an expensive exercise, both in terms of time and resources and it may not be transferrable to a different style of community but it has clearly has a positive impact on a generation of young drivers in the area.

At a time when efforts are being made nationally to identify means of reaching young people with an effective and credible road safety message It would be regrettable if economic constraints were to force the project to cease operating. The author is of the opinion that a more detailed study of the Project and an effective benchmarking exercise with equivalent groups of young people around the country would be worthwhile as a means of identifying good, transferrable practices that could potentially be incorporated into mainstream training and education.

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The “Momentum Project” - Youth Clubs UK

RoSPA National Road Safety Committee, Minutes - various

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Appendix I

Momentum Project:

Questionnaire – July 2008

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this exercise. I hope to gain sufficient information to carry out an initial evaluation of the 'Momentum Project' and assess its impact on those involved and the wider community. Your responses will be completely confidential and will only be used for the purpose of researching and reporting on the Momentum Project. No individual will be identified at any stage of the process.

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About you:

1/ I have been involved with the Momentum Project as: (delete those inapplicable)

- a/ A participant
- b/ A volunteer assistant
- c/ A road safety professional
- d/ Other
- e/ Not involved at all

2/ My age is:

- a/ 15 – 19
- b/ 19 –23
- c/ over 23

3/ My driving experience is:

- a/ Not yet old enough to drive
- b/ Learner driver
- c/ Licence holder less than 3 years
- d/ Licence holder more than 3 years

About driving:

1. Please number the following road safety risks in the order you think as being most relevant in terms of accident causation with '1' being the most significant and '13' being the least:

- Peer pressure to show off
- Poor road conditions
- Defective vehicles
- Animals on the road
- Inexperience
- Unfamiliarity with the vehicle

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- Drink driving
- Driving under the influence of drugs (legal or illegal)
- Driving whilst tired
- Driving too fast for the conditions
- Poor weather conditions
- In car distractions (mobile phones/sound systems/satellite navigation etc)
- Other (please state)

2. "I think that passing the driving test indicates I am/was/will be fully prepared for the challenges posed by driving." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

3. "I am confident that I can deal effectively with driving anywhere in the UK" (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

4. What do you consider to be the emotion that has the most negative affect on your driving ability? Please list in order with 1 being the most negative and 5 the least.

- Anger
- Impatience
- Frustration
- Happiness
- Sadness

5. "I consider it important to have a good understanding of basic vehicle condition and maintenance." (tyre condition, brakes, steering, lights etc) (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

6. What car (or type of car) would you own at the moment if you had a free choice. Choose one please.

- Subaru WRX
- Volkswagen Polo
- Landrover Discovery (Diesel)
- Smart Car
- Toyota Avensis

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7. For you personally - what is the most persuasive argument to discourage risk taking on the roads? Please order from 1 as the most persuasive to 6 as the least.

- Awareness of the danger involved
- Awareness of the personal consequences (death or serious injury)
- Awareness of the personal consequences (loss of vehicle/licence/employment etc)
- Awareness of consequences for others (injury to friends/other road users etc)
- Awareness of consequences for others (parents/relatives/ friends who would be affected by your death or injury)
- Other – please state

8. Have you frightened yourself - through your own actions - whilst driving? (Choose one please)

- Never
- Once
- More than once
- Regularly

9. "I am fully aware of the legal limits and penalties attached to drinking and driving." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

10. "I am fully aware of the legal limits and penalties attached to drug driving." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

11. Statistically the most 'at risk' age group of drivers in Scotland is? (choose one please)

- 17 – 25
- 25 - 30
- 30 – 40
- 40 – 45
- 45 – 50
- 50 –55
- over 55

12. Statistically the most dangerous roads in Scotland are? (choose one please)

- Motorways
- Roads outside schools
- Country roads
- Roads in city centres

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13. "If I were being driven by someone who was driving in a risky way I would ask them to stop that behaviour." (Choose one please)

- Agree strongly
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

14. "As a passenger I have been frightened by someone's driving." (choose one please)

- Never
- Once or twice
- Frequently

15. "As a road user I have seen examples of bad driving." (choose one please)

- Never
- Once or twice
- Frequently

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