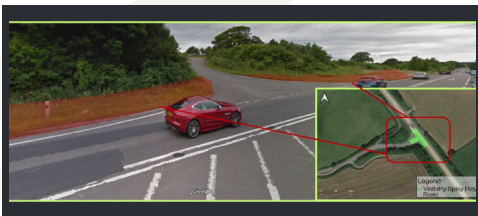


## SAFER VISIBILITY SPLAYS

### THE PROBLEM

Clear sightlines around road junctions are essential for the safety of road users. Local authorities are responsible for keeping these sightlines clear of foliage and vegetation that may prevent road users from seeing other traffic; the areas they cut are known as 'visibility splays'. Keeping these areas clear is an important part of road maintenance, and becomes vital during spring and summer months when grass and foliage growth has the potential to obstruct the view.

Managing visibility splays can be challenging due to the need for regular maintenance, to prevent collisions. Splays that are not sufficiently cut have the potential to contribute to collisions and road problems. In 2019, 909 fatalities were recorded on A roads, compared with 749 fatalities on all other types of roads in the UK\*. Most of these fatal collisions occurred at junctions.



### THE APPROACH

Using a digitised system to identify and inspect junctions ensures efficiency when maintaining visibility splays. Junctions can be highlighted within Grass SMART, identifying grass or hedge assets to be maintained as a visibility splay. Creating this data digitally gives clarity on where assets are and their varying requirements, saving time and making them easier to maintain. Using reliable, clear data allows a more consistent approach in maintenance, leading to safer junctions.

The importance of a visibility splay is determined by the type of road, speed limit and whether it lies within a rural or urban area. These factors can be used as filters, and applied individually or as a combination, so that higher priority assets can be prioritised for maintenance. This makes maintaining splays more manageable. Existing grass or hedge assets within Grass SMART can be clipped according to the visibility splay shape and size. Using a system such as Grass SMART to identify and prioritise 'at risk' junctions makes the grass cutting schedule more reliable, in turn making the roads a safer place for users.

### THE RESULT

Implementing Grass SMART to prioritise the maintenance of potentially dangerous junctions improves the management and safety of these visibility splays. By making maintenance tasks more straightforward and focused, local authorities can be more consistent with the effective upkeep of these crucial areas. This advancement has not only streamlined the maintenance process but also contributed to enhancing road safety, ensuring sight lines are clear for pedestrians and motorists and reducing collisions at junctions.

