A family saloon car speeds directly towards the edge of the carriageway at 50 mph, disaster seems inevitable for all concerned – a nightmare for all road users as well as those responsible for maintaining our highways.

However, this is not an accident about to happen but routine testing of the Brett Trief GST2A containment kerb system at the Transport Research Laboratory facility at Crowthorne in Berkshire.

The Trief kerb has been a familiar feature on British roads for the last 50 years where it provides a passive safety feature for drivers, pedestrians and infrastructure alike. The kerb was designed to both contain vehicles within the carriageway and to redirect any vehicles that do strike it back onto their original course so that they don’t pose a hazard to other road-users.

What is relatively new is the BS EN 1317 standard for Road Restraint Systems which was first introduced in 2010. This standard provides test criteria for various types of containment – in the case of the Trief kerb the testing was to cover normal containment known as N1. This entails sending a 1500kg passenger vehicle directly into the test section at a speed of 80 kmh with an angle of impact of 20° - more details can be gained from the test methodology of the test known as TB31.

The test clearly showed that the Trief GST2A kerb held firm and redirected the vehicle onto the road. Of the three ratings available (A, B and C), Trief received an A proving that it can withstand severe impacts with no deformations or intrusions into the passenger compartment of the vehicle. Of equal importance was that none of the vehicle’s wheels passed over the kerb line which means that any infrastructure, or pedestrians, would also have been fully protected.

Andrew Gill, marketing manager for Brett Landscaping, said the testing showed that Trief remained at the forefront of passive safety systems, protecting the safety of motorists and pedestrians alike. He commented:

“Trief has now been in service and protecting road-users and infrastructure for half a century. This testing is further proof that it is still the most cost-effective redirectional kerb system available on the market.

“Protecting the safety of drivers and pedestrians, as well as buildings and street furniture, is the primary focus of a containment kerb so it is exceedingly pleasing to see that independent experts have concluded that Trief meets...
their high standards. Brett Landscaping prides itself on the durable, high-quality attributes of its commercial landscaping products, of which Trief is just one example.

"More importantly, we believe that specifiers should insist on products meeting these important standards to ensure that our highways remain as safe as possible; ‘or similar approved’ is just too much of a gamble to take when lives are at stake. We hope that the mandatory introduction of CE marking for construction products will significantly help in this respect."

Trief kerbing is deployed to meet a number of challenges on the road network, including the segregation of traffic in mixed-use areas, the development of traffic calming systems, the creation of pedestrian refuges and for the provision of added protection for toll booths.

The Trief GST2A kerb was tested by the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) against BS EN 1317 (N1) Road Restraint Systems and proven to pass. The test consisted of a 1,500kg passenger vehicle hitting the kerb at a speed of 80kmh and at an angle of 20°. In order to pass the test, the vehicle must be safely redirected to protect pedestrians and other roads users.

The diagram below illustrates the test:

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More information is available by visiting [www.brettpaving.co.uk](http://www.brettpaving.co.uk) where a video of the test as well as a copy of the full test report can be downloaded.

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