



# Traffic Safety Roads

The Graham Feest Consultancy  
*Incorporating the UK Road Safety Network*

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# Traffic Safety Roads

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**GRAHAM FEEST** is a road safety consultant organising and leading accredited low-cost high value events around the UK; speaking at national and local conferences/seminars and workshops both in the UK and overseas and providing support and guidance to other people drawing on more than forty years' experience in the field of road and traffic safety. He is a former County Road Safety Officer and Head of Road Safety for IAM RoadSmart. Graham is Chairman of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving, Chairman of RoSPA's National Road Safety Committee, Road Safety Advisor to the ADI National Joint Council and Road Safety Consultant for the RichWorks.

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*Front Cover: Thousands of Bikers in Bike4Life ride in aid of the Air Ambulance in April 2022. Picture from the Shropshire Star*

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## DRUG DRIVING

IAM RoadSmart has analysed Department for Transport (DfT) statistics and has found that there were almost 2,500 casualties in relation to drug-driving in 2021, representing a surge of over 260 per cent since 2012 and has led to the IAM calling on the government to take urgent action.

The issue has also been highlighted in the courts, as Criminal Justice System Statistics (CJSS) have disclosed that the number of drug-driving convictions has increased year on year, reaching 12,500 in 2019. Worryingly, nearly half (44 per cent) of these crimes are perpetrated by repeat offenders, with many of these cases occurring within one year.



These upward trends come amid worrying reports that, due to inefficient testing protocols, which requires blood samples to be taken by a healthcare practitioner, some police officers are resorting to bringing drug-driving suspects to hard-pressed A&E departments to take a sample.

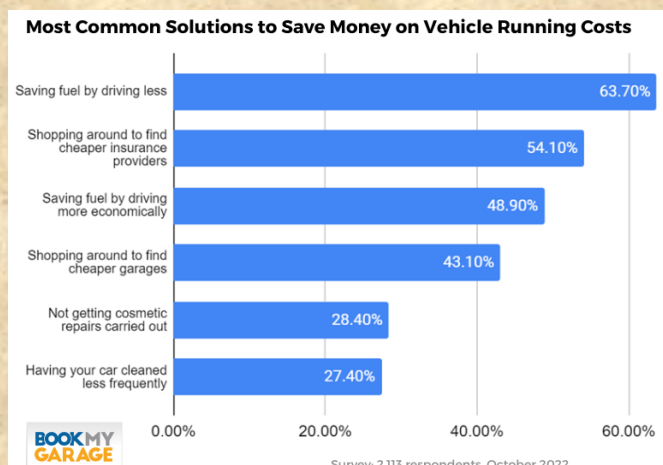
An IAM RoadSmart survey of 2,028 motorists 1-in-10 respondents stated that they have driven, or been a passenger in a vehicle where the driver has been under the influence of illegal drugs. The survey also disturbingly discovered that 6 per cent of people would be comfortable driving while under the influence of illegal drugs, and 14 per cent of those surveyed stated that they would not stop a family member or friend who was planning to drive while under the influence of drugs.

IAM RoadSmart's most recent annual Safety Culture Report showed that motorists consider drink and drug-drivers as one of the biggest risks to their personal safety - more than other issues such as speeding on residential streets, people driving aggressively or not wearing a seat belt.



## COST OF LIVING IMPACT ON MOTORISTS

Two thirds (64%) of UK motorists are reducing their vehicle usage to cut fuel bills, according to the latest research by BookMyGarage.com. The study on the impact of the cost of living crisis explored how drivers are cutting expenditures as a result of the rising cost of living.



The research also found that over a quarter of drivers (28.4%) said they are putting off cosmetic repairs, whilst many (27.4%) are also cleaning their car less frequently to save money as well as using cars less, nearly half (49%) of the 2,113 respondents are also driving more economically to save fuel.

“Reducing annual mileage by just 10% - or 1,000 miles - could save hundreds of pounds in fuel bills according to Jessica Potts, Head of Marketing at BookMyGarage.com.



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## NEW THINK CAMPAIGN AIMED AT YOUNG MALE DRIVERS

Speeding accounts for around 1 in 4 fatal collisions, but despite this is considered one of the least risky and most acceptable behaviours among drivers, especially young men.

....A new THINK! campaign is urging young, male drivers to think about the dangers of driving too fast for road conditions following a survey which shows young males underestimate the risks of driving 'just a few miles per hour over the right speed for the conditions'.



According to the survey 43% consider exceeding the speed limit to be unacceptable but rank drink driving 68% and using a mobile phone 52% as both higher risks and more unacceptable.

The new THINK! campaign, 'Is pushing it worth it?', seeks to challenge over-confidence among younger drivers and highlight that while excessive speeding is an issue, it is equally important to not go slightly over the speed limit or drive too fast for the road.

Richard Holden, road safety minister, said:

"Road safety is our priority, but we want to accelerate our efforts to tackle unsafe driving habits and create some of the safest roads in the world. We're highlighting the dangers of relaxed driving attitudes on rural roads so that everyone recognises that pushing the speed limit is just not worth it."

The campaign also highlights that speed kills and injures 54 young people every week in the UK.

## PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR 15/20 MINUTE NEIGHBOURHOODS

The concept of a 15-minute city (or neighbourhood), commonplace in many countries is the idea that most things that people need are located within a 15-minute walk or cycle of their home and it would appear that most people would like their area to become a '15-minute neighbourhood', according to the findings of a YouGov study.

In recent months, it has been the subject of intense media scrutiny, after Oxford City Council announced plans to make itself a 20-minute city to reduce traffic.

A new survey from YouGov shows that a majority of the public (62%) would support their local authority making it a target to make their area a 15-minute neighbourhood.

Around nine in ten respondents believe that people should have a bus stop (90%), and a post box (87%) within a 15-minute walk of their home.

Having medical facilities such as a pharmacy (85%) and a GP surgery (83%) should also be included in the target according to most Britons.

However, less than half see the need for a shopping centre (28%), restaurant (38%) or hairdressers (46%) to be close by.

One concern was the feasibility of implementing 15-minute neighbourhoods. Around half of respondents (48%) believe that it would be easy to make their area into a 15-minute neighbourhood, compared to 42% who think it would be hard - but this largely depends on how rural or urban an area they live in.

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## GENERAL NEWS

### Pot Holes

Chancellor Jeremy Hunt has announced local authorities will receive an additional £200 million in funding to fix potholes. Announced during the Spring Budget on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023 the funding represents a 20% rise in the money set aside annually for the issue. It will be in addition to the £1.125 billion being spent annually between 2020 and 2025 on resurfacing and repairing local highways.

### Active Travel

The Government is being urged to reverse the cuts announced to active travel funding, amid fears they will counteract the tremendous progress we've seen in recent years. Transport secretary Mark Harper announced that overall active travel funding for the current parliamentary term is being reduced from £3.8 billion to £3 billion.

This includes a two-thirds cut to promised capital investment in infrastructure for walking, wheeling and cycling, from £308 million to only £100 million for the next two years.

While lamps, reflectors and indicators continue to be the most frequent reasons that vehicles fail their MOTs, it's problems with brakes and tyres that are more likely to lead to the most serious failures, analysis reveals.

### MOT Failures

While lamps, reflectors and indicators continue to be the most frequent reasons that vehicles fail their MOTs, it's problems with brakes and tyres that are more likely to lead to the most serious failures.

DVSA data, analysed by the RAC, shows that non-working headlights, indicators and reflectors accounted for just over a quarter (25.5%) of all MOT failures in the 12 months to March 2022. Faulty or broken suspensions represented just under a fifth (18.3%) of all failures, while problems with brakes (17%) and tyres (12%) were the third and fourth biggest reasons.

Some 8% - the equivalent to 2.4m vehicles - were found to have at least one dangerous defect. In these most serious cases, where an examiner states a vehicle cannot be driven until that defect is repaired, brakes and tyres represented 88% of failures.

### Highway Code APP

The Stationery Office has launched a new Highway Code app aimed at making it even easier to keep up to date with the rules of the road. The app provides

- Instant access to the very latest version of the Official Highway Code while on the move, on tablets and mobile devices
- Quizzes and timed challenge features, that help users check their knowledge of the Highway Code and track their progress.
- A voice over option enabling users to listen as well as read.

The app costs £3.99 and is available to download on both Android and iOS platforms. It can be found at <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/the-official-dvsa-highway-code/id522687241>



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## TOP PEOPLE COMING AND GOING

The new Executive Director of PACTS (Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety) is Jamie Hassall.



Jamie will take up his appointment in May is a seasoned road safety professional, who brings a wealth of knowledge, experience and contacts to the role. He moves from National Highways where he has built up more than 20 years of experience. Jamie was responsible for improving driver compliance on the strategic road network and led trials of new equipment to detect close following, and mobile phone and seatbelt offences. He also worked closely with the police, DVLA and many other leading stakeholders.

*Jamie takes over the role from David Davies who is to retiring having steered PACTS for the last ten years. David has enjoyed many highlights during his time at PACTS, including receiving a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award for research into the safety of private e-scooters in the UK in 2022. He was also presented with the Road Safety GB Achievement Award in November 2022.*



The new Chairman of the Motor Schools Association (MSAGB) is Mike Yeomans



Mike is a director of Training UK Development. He delivers in-house and external training assessments in all types of vehicles, as well as classroom delivery of Driver Health and Safety, assisting School academies with minibus training and driver records and is an adviser on Road Risk Management Policy. Mike is President of IAM Roadsmart Hull and East Riding Advanced Motorists and an executive board member of Institute for Master Tutors of Driving.

*Mike takes over from Peter Harvey who has been Chairman of MSA since 1995 during which time he has been involved in changes to the driving test, given evidence to the Transport Select Committee and represented the MSA on the National Associations Strategic Partnership (NSAP) which from time to time he has chaired. In the Queen's Birthday Honours list 2011 Peter was appointed a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE).*



The New President of the Approved Driving Instructors National Joint Council (ADINJC) is Lynne Barrie



Lynne came to the driving instruction industry after many successful years as a secondary school teacher. She initially worked on a part time basis after having a family but her enthusiasm and expertise have meant that she is now one of the industry's leading ADIs. Of the some 36,000 plus driving instructors, Lynne is one of a handful that has gained a Master's Degree in Driver Training from Middlesex University. She is author of the 'Standards Check Success' Book and 'Come to Coaching' used by a vast number of PDIs and ADIs.

*Lynne takes over from Neil Peek who came into driver training after a period of service in the Merchant Navy establishing Peeks Driver Training based in Lowestoft over 50 years ago. Neil has served as president of the ADINJC with great enthusiasm and dedication ready to serve in what ever capacity he was asked and always on hand to give advice and help to up and coming driver trainers who are setting up their business.*



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## EDUCATING DRIVERS

National Highways has launched a series easy to follow videos designed to help organisations educate drivers who use light commercial vehicles. The eight videos are available through National Highways' Driving for Better Business (DfBB) programme.

They 'cut through the myths' to help keep drivers safe, vans legal and to ensure employers comply with not just road traffic legislation but also their health and safety at work responsibilities. Each of the videos covers a different relevant subject matter to both managers and drivers on Fatigue, Drivers' hours, Safe towing, Distractions, Severe weather, Speed limits, Roadworthiness and Safe loading

The videos are available via <https://vandrivertoolkit.co.uk/>

## DASHCAM PORTAL CAMPAIGN

Cycling UK has renewed its call for Police Scotland and Scottish Government to introduce an online portal for the submission of camera evidence. They launched the campaign for a national dashcam portal in October 2020 and in March 2021 the campaign received support from a coalition of 33 road user organisations including the AA and the RAC. A YouGov poll in August of the same year showed that 59% of Scottish adults supported the introduction of an online system that allows the public to upload footage of "dangerous" driving on Scottish roads, while just 17% opposed it.

In March 2022, the Scottish Government announced that it had allocated £300,000 to develop the National Dashcam Safety Portal but in October, Police Scotland said that the portal was 'under review' due to budget constraints.

## NEW ROAD SAFETY LEAD IN THE FIRE SERVICE

Dan Quin, who is the Chief Fire officer for Surrey Fire and Rescue Service has been appointed as the new lead of the National Fire Chief Council's (NFCC) road safety and road rescue teams. Dan, who already holds the road rescue position, will now undertake the additional road safety lead element of the role.



Dan replaces Tony Crook, who has held the role since 2019 and retires from the fire service and will be taking up a role as road safety manager with Lancashire County Council in April 2023.

## POLICE CHECKING EYESIGHT

Police forces will be conducting voluntary roadside checks over the coming weeks as part of a nationwide initiative to remind motorists they have a legal responsibility to ensure their vision is roadworthy every time they get behind the wheel. The campaign is being led by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), with the support of a whole host of stakeholders, including the Driving for Better Business (DfBB) campaign.

Research shows that 90% of information needed to drive is visual, demonstrating the importance of keeping eyes and vision healthy. Drivers are being reminded that regular sight tests, every two years unless advised otherwise by an optometrist, will help stop their eyesight becoming a road safety hazard. If someone is found to be driving with vision that falls below the minimum standards, they could face up to a £1,000 fine, three points on their licence and potential disqualification. Drivers who fail a roadside number plate test can also have their driving licence revoked on the spot if a police officer deems them unsafe to be on the road.



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## THE LIMITATIONS OF HGV's

National Highways has launched a new campaign amid concerns car and van drivers underestimate limitations HGV drivers face in seeing passing vehicles. In a recent survey commissioned by National Highways, while nearly three quarters of people said they take extra care when overtaking a HGV, many said they did not know how many blind spots a HGV had.

Whilst lorries now have additional mirrors as standard which has improved driver visibility they still have 'blind spots'.

HGV drivers have four areas of 'limited visibility' - at the front, rear and each side of their vehicle.



In the campaign video, supported by the Road Haulage Association, Logistics UK and other HGV bodies, drivers are being urged to 'know the zones' where HGV drivers have limited visibility.

The advice for drivers is also to:

- Pass quickly and safely
- Where possible, don't linger next to a HGV

Jeremy Phillips, head of road safety at National Highways, said:

"Safety is our number one priority, and we all have a role to play in keeping each other safe when driving. Our advice to motorists overtaking a HGV is simple; avoid tailgating the HGV when considering an overtaking manoeuvre and as the Highway Code states, do so quickly and safely to avoid staying in an area of limited visibility."

## DELIVERING THE SAFE SYSTEM APPROACH

Getting back in the conference room for positive learning, interaction and networking

The Graham Feest Consultancy organise a number of Conference Style Events around the UK each year. The all important underpinning theme for 2023 will be based on "Delivering the Safe System Approach" which will, we understand, be central to the New Road Safety Strategic Framework.

With the support of Sponsors, Clearview Intelligence, Geveko and HCC Solicitors, the price remains the same as last year and delivered on the basis of High Value at Low Cost. The Graham Feest Consultancy is an accredited Training Provider for CIHT which support the requirements for CPD



Forthcoming Dates:

- Monday 5th June 2023 The Vermont Hotel, Newcastle
- Monday 25th September 2023 The Guildhall, Hull
- Monday 2nd October 2023 The Radisson Hotel, Perth
- Monday 23rd October 2023 The Lenardo Hotel (formerly Jury's), Cardiff

Although some of the actual details have not been published as yet for these events you can book you place for any of the above by going to <https://www.grahamfeest.com/gfc-events/delivering-the-safe-systems-approach/> linking to the event you wish to book and then completing the form.



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## WHAT IS A RURAL ROAD

It is frustrating to road safety practitioners who are doing their best to reduce the number of casualties on the road when we get evidence of where the need is but we do nothing about it. This is very true of what we know and have done so for many years about the number of people losing their lives on rural roads.

Government statistics show that of the 1,558 road deaths in Britain in 2021, 981 (63%) were listed as occurring on rural roads - that is; outside of a town or city. However, 649 of these deaths took place not on the twisting country lanes typically associated with being a rural route, but on motorways (86 deaths) and A roads (563 deaths).

So we need first a much better understanding of what exactly a 'rural road' is and a recent study for the RAC Foundation, carried out by Agilysis, has taken the first steps in breaking down rural roads into several subcategories so that crashes can be better understood, and money better spent to reduce crashes and mitigate their effects when they do occur.



The researchers decided on a range of road characteristics to meaningfully divide rural roads, including: width, traffic flow, traffic type, speed limit, gradient, markings and location. They then compared and contrasted the characteristics of a sample group of 483 sections of rural roads (not including motorways) which measured 1,563km in total. The routes were also appraised by a highway engineer.

Following this the study team identified four main categories of rural road:

- Principal roads - generally wide, fast moving and flat, sometimes dual carriageway, often close to populated areas
- Country roads - narrower, sometimes undulating, single-carriageway with moderate traffic levels
- Neighbourhood roads - through rural communities
- Winding roads - narrow single carriageways, mostly unclassified and sometimes single track, generally low speed and with little traffic

These four categories were then further divided to give a total of ten separate, identifiable types of rural road varying from the busiest and fastest dual carriageways all the way through to hill passes and remote roads.

Steve Gooding, director of the RAC Foundation, said:

"The question may seem simple: 'what is a rural road?' The answer turns out to be more complex than you might think when interpreting road safety statistics. This report suggests there are at least ten types of 'rural' road with specific characteristics, and the only thing they have in common is that they run outside our big towns and cities. The risk is that the catch-all term 'rural road' has hidden a multitude of different highway types, each of which poses its own range of road safety challenges. The better we understand our roads and the risks users face on them, the better targeted our decisions on when and where to spend money will be. New, standardised categories would allow the dozens of police forces, hundreds of councils and any number of road safety professionals to use a common terminology to compare experiences and deploy those interventions most likely to reduce risk."

A copy of the report can be found at <https://www.grahamfeest.com/resources/latest-uploads/>

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## FIT DASH CAM'S AS STANDARD

Around 18% of motorists have a dash cam fitted in their car but a recent report from Go.Compare Car Insurance has found that nearly all dash cam owners believe the device should be installed as standard in new vehicles.

The poll found that the majority (91%) of dash cam owners believe they should be a standard piece of safety equipment, much like seatbelts and airbags. Meanwhile, 82% of drivers who don't own a dash cam would be very keen to get one fitted if it reduced their car insurance premiums, despite just 12% having ever used video footage in an insurance claim.



There are more drivers using dash cam footage to report crimes. Clips of “dangerous” driving and car-related crime are received by police forces across the UK for investigation via the National Dash Cam Safety Portal (NDSP). There has been a 185% total increase in dash cam uploads to police over the last three years - reflective of the growing popularity of dash cam technology.

The National Dash Cam Safety Portal now supports almost every UK police force, however, there are still some gaps (see page 5 reference Scotland). Overall, this has helped create greater awareness of how the footage can actually help to protect drivers, pedestrians, cyclists and other road users.

Since 2020, at least 55,000 occurrences of “dangerous” driving have been captured by dash cams and uploaded to the portal.

## MORE 20MPH LIMITS IN LONDON

Transport for London is proposing to introduce 65km of new 20mph speed limits across the capital to help reach one of Mayor Sadiq Khan's key aims in the Vision Zero plan to eliminate deaths and serious injury on the transport network across London and see the reduction in speed as a vital part of that strategy.

The new 20mph roads are set to apply to the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, Lewisham, Southwark, Wandsworth, Merton, Bromley and Lambeth.



The Mayor has launched a number of speed limiting features in recent years to enable more walking and cycling in the capital and it is hoped the new speed limits would help to make a large area of south London safer and more attractive for people to live and work.

The overall aim of this, aside from making roads safer, is to encourage more people out of their cars and to walk, cycle and use public transport more often and with more people using more sustainable forms of travel, congestion in the capital will be eased, as well as reduced air pollution rates.

Subject to approval, work will begin to reduce the speed limits as soon as September 2023.

The new speed limits will be supported by new signs and road markings, with TfL and the Metropolitan Police working together to ensure drivers comply. The new 20mph areas would also have banners introduced to increase driver awareness.

It is estimated that this year, the police will enforce around 650,000 speeding offences. This is an increase of around 30 percent compared to 2021/2022.



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## INSTITUTE OF MASTER TUTORS OF DRIVING AWARDS 2023

Supported by the Graham Feest Consultancy the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving are seeking nominees for their 2023 awards.



The awards are the Institute's annual opportunity to recognise outstanding contribution to driver training and road safety. They will recognise individuals and/or organisations whether that be from the voluntary, public or commercial sector that have contributed significantly to driver training and or road safety in the United Kingdom. In addition to the main awards, where appropriate, certificates demonstrating a highly commended status may well be awarded.

Nominations for consideration can be submitted by any person or persons and self-nomination is perfectly acceptable but should be accompanied by supportive evidence from a third party. Achievements which are worthy and related to the areas of driver training and road safety will be considered.

The awards are judged in one open class which could include nomination in the areas such as:

- a new initiative or project which supports driver training and/or road safety;
- a sustained and evaluated programme which deserves recognition;
- a business or company who can demonstrate sustainable good practice,
- an individual who is worthy in his work as a driver trainer and/or road safety practitioner;
- a person or company which has made an outstanding contribution over time in driver training and/or road safety.

The closing date for nomination is 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and the awards will be presented on Sunday 10th September 2023 at the IMTD Annual Lunch.

## ROAD SAFETY INVESTIGATION BRANCH

Despite what some will see as very slow progress since it was announced that there would be a Road Safety Investigation Branch, Roads minister Richard Holden MP has confirmed that the Government is still committed to its creation but has declined to say when it will be up and running.

It is now almost a year since it was officially announced that the branch would be created and it is now understood that the Government intends to bring forward measures to enable the creation of a Road Safety Investigation Branch as soon as Parliamentary time allows. However those looking into how such a unit will operate suggest that we are still several months away to the start of its work on the ground.

There is widely considered to be 'overwhelming support' for the move from within the sector. Such a body would bring road safety into line with similar independent bodies that already exist for air, maritime and rail accidents.

*Traffic Safety Roads is distributed free to a wide range of road safety practitioners. Comments on the items are welcomed as are any articles or points which readers may wish to make that are either directly related to a published item, an expression of personal views or an article of a relevant and topical nature. Any contributions will be appropriately assigned and the Graham Feest Consultancy has the final say on what it included.... Send any contributions to [graham@grahamfeest.com](mailto:graham@grahamfeest.com)*

*If you are a new subscriber to this newsletter then you can find the three previous issues at <https://www.grahamfeest.com/uk-road-safety-network/newsletter/>*

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## ROAD PRICING

It would appear, at least for the time being that road pricing as a substitute for both vehicle excise duty and the tax on fuel is off the agenda for a few years to come.

There is good support for such a measure which would see motorists pay per mile for using the road, seen by many as a much fairer system meaning that motorists paid in accordance with their use of the road and would further encourage motorists to use other forms of transport for shorter journeys thereby contributing to a reduction in the carbon footprint and congestion.

However the Transport Select Committee who spent a great deal of time looking at the issue has slammed Treasury ministers for failing to engage with its report published last year on road pricing, in which it warned that the Government risks losing billions if it does not explore new forms of road taxation with the advent of electric vehicles which are not currently subject to Fuel Duty or Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) although the recent budget announced that VED would be applicable to electric vehicles from 2025.

The Chancellor has however said the Government 'does not currently have plans to consider road pricing'.

## PROJECT EDWARD 2023

The Project EDWARD week of action will take place this year from Monday 15th to Friday 19th May, and aligns with the United Nations Global Week of Action for Road Safety.



The theme for this year is "Safer Mobility, Everyone's Responsibility"

Find out more about project Edward and sign up to receive free updates on how plans for the week and the build up before is progressing at <https://projectedward.org/>

Remember however that Project Edwards may well focus a major part of its activity on one week each year but EDWARD stands for Every Day Without A Road Death.

## RED X

Emergency services have joined forces with National Highways to remind drivers not to ignore the red X sign after one council revealed it had prosecuted almost 10,000 drivers.

The red X is used to close lanes when an obstruction such as a broken-down vehicle is detected in the road ahead. Abiding by the signal is vital to avoid a potentially serious collision.

The cameras can be used to automatically detect vehicles passing illegally under a red X or entering the lane beyond a red X, which can result in a fixed penalty of up to £100 and three points or, in some cases, more severe penalties or a court appearance.

National Highways says that if your vehicle has a problem, or you get into trouble on a motorway, stay calm and try to exit at the next junction or motorway service area. If that's not possible, put your left indicators on, move into the left lane, enter the next emergency area, or hard shoulder, put your hazard lights on, get behind a safety barrier where there is one and keep well away from moving traffic. If you are unable to exit your vehicle and get to a safe place, have stopped in a live traffic lane or feel your life is in danger, National Highways says that you should stay in your vehicle with your seatbelts and hazard lights on and call 999 immediately or press the SOS button in your car.



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## VISION AND DRIVING

*Henry Leonard, a UK-registered optometrist from the Association of Optometrists outlines why drivers should have a sight test every 10 years to prove their vision still meets the driving standard. Henry has a particular interest in issues around driving and vision*



It's been estimated that almost 3000 injuries on our roads each year are caused by drivers with poor vision, but in the UK, if a car driver can read a number plate at 20 metres when they take their driving test, they may continue driving for the rest of their life, with no further vision checks.

The DVLA relies on drivers reporting problems with their eyesight, but some drivers are unwilling to notify the DVLA about problems with their vision, whilst others fall below the required standards without realising, because their vision has changed since they passed their driving test.

So, how widespread is this problem? One of the most striking findings in the Association of Optometrists' (AOP) Voice of Optometry panel survey was the consensus of more than 1000 practitioners on the subject of vision and driving. With more than one in three of those surveyed reporting they'd seen a patient in the past month with vision below the driving standard, yet continuing to drive, many felt there was a need for more stringent rules.

Nine in 10 respondents concluded that the current sight requirements for a driving licence are insufficient and the same amount called for regular sight tests for all drivers. We also know from a public poll that two-thirds (62%) of people are currently "putting off" a sight test and 36% are relying on an out-of-date spectacle prescription.

Optometrists recommend that everyone has a regular sight test at least once every two years, and more frequently in some cases. A sight test is much more than simply a check of whether you need glasses or contact lenses; it's also an eye health check, and can even pick up some general health conditions, such

as diabetes, high blood pressure and raised cholesterol.

Some eye conditions, such as glaucoma, come on gradually over many years, and without a regular sight test, you might not know there's anything wrong until it's too late to treat effectively. Studies show people can lose up to 40% of their peripheral vision to glaucoma before they realise anything's wrong, but if it's picked up early as part of a routine sight test, it's usually readily treatable with laser treatment or eyedrops.

So, what can be done to ensure that the drivers on our roads can see properly? Firstly, we need to change the law; in much the same way that we check cars remain roadworthy through a regular MOT, we should check that drivers' vision remains clear enough to drive safely at regular intervals.

Ideally, everyone should have a sight test at least once every two years, but if even we required drivers to prove they could see properly when they renew their driving licence every 10 years, it would still be a big step forward in terms of road safety. Is it really too much to ask drivers to have a sight test every 10 years, to prove their vision still meets the driving standard?

The good news is that, in most cases, optometrists can help motorists continue to drive safely for longer, either by ensuring they have the correct glasses or contact lenses, or referring patients for specialist eye treatment.

We need the law to change, and recognise the importance of vision to road safety, as it does in many other European countries, but in the meantime, by having a regular sight test every two years, and getting the right vision correction, motorists can take a positive step to being a safer driver.

# Traffic Safety Roads

## LONDON CONGESTION CHARGE ANNIVERSARY

The London Congestion Charge was introduced twenty years ago on 17th February 2003 aimed at reducing pollution and traffic in central London.

Data shows that its introduction:

- ✓ Limited traffic entering the zone by 18% during weekday charging hours
- ✓ Reduced congestion by 30%
- ✓ Boosted bus travel in central London by 33%
- ✓ Enabled 10% of journeys to switch to walking, cycling and public transport

TfL says the Congestion Charge has helped reduce the trend of worsening congestion that other cities have seen with an analysis indicating that there would have been three million additional journeys by car across London in 2019 without the changes introduced to encourage more sustainable travel patterns.



Money raised from the Congestion Charge has also been used to help Londoners get from A to B by more environmentally friendly ways, with increases in buses and reallocation of road space. This has included delivering improved facilities for people walking and cycling, like protected cycle lanes.

## MOBILE PHONE ENFORCEMENT

All four Welsh police forces are supporting a campaign to crack down on drivers who flout the law by using a mobile phone. The operation, which Dyfed-Powys, South Wales, Gwent and North Wales Police are participating, is being coordinated by the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC).

The campaign aims to remind motorists of the risks of calling, texting, using the internet or streaming music or videos while driving - and the penalties faced by those who are caught.

The consequences range from a £200 fine and six points on their licence for a one-time offence, to a lengthy ban and a £1,000 fine for those caught twice. New drivers - those who have passed within two years of being caught - face having their licence revoked if caught just once.



## AGGRESSION - MOTORISTS AND CYCLISTS

Aggression from both motorists and cyclists is a real issue according to the results of a new survey conducted by IAM RoadSmart for their annual Driving Safety Culture Report which surveyed more than 2,000 motorists on driving safety attitudes and behaviour.

Almost two thirds (65%) of respondents believe that aggressive cyclists are a threat to their personal safety; a figure which increased to 78% when asked the same question about those driving a motor vehicle aggressively.

The survey also shows that the problem is 'seen to be worsening on both sides of the rivalry', with 60% of those surveyed believing that aggressive cyclists are a bigger problem compared to three years ago. The figure was 63% for aggressive motorists, over the same time period.



# Traffic Safety Roads

## CHANGES TO MOTORCYCLE TRAINER ASSESSMENT AND AUTHORISATION

The DVSA are making two changes to motorcycle trainer assessment and authorisation from 3rd April 2023 as part of their ongoing campaign to continually raise professional standards in motorcycle instruction.

Introducing basic Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for new and existing motorcycle trainers

*From this date all motorcycle instructors must get a basic DBS check when they renew their existing licence. Anyone applying to become a motorcycle instructor for the first time will need to get a basic DBS check when they apply.*

Requiring trainers teach a minimum of two pupils during their CBT (compulsory basic training) standards checks.

*Also from this date all CBT standards checks must include at least two pupils. The DVSA are making this change to reflect real life training where most courses involve small groups of 2-4 pupils rather than one to one training.*

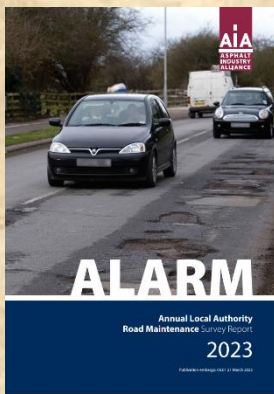


## THE STATE OF THE ROAD NETWORK

No one can dispute the fact that the state of the roads throughout Great Britain are in a very sorry state. Apart from pot holes, both white lining and signage is in a poor state of repair. Local Authorities are paying out more and more in compensation due for vehicle damage and the funding is just not adequate to support what is required to bring the roads up to a reasonable state of repair.

Whilst we constantly report from a collision point of view that 95% is down to human error one can see over the course of the next few years a shift downwards of this percentage as the poor state of the roads become a greater factor. We are very good at building new infrastructure to a high standard but do not back it up with the money required for its maintenance. Many would say that the time has come to pause all new works for a couple of years and put the money into repairing and maintaining the stock we have.

Every year the Asphalt Industry Alliance (AIA) commissions an independent survey of local authority highway departments in England (including London) and Wales.



The Annual Local Authority Road Maintenance (ALARM) survey - now in its 28th year - provides detailed insight into the funding and conditions of the local road network, based on information provided directly by those responsible for its maintenance. This year it received a record number of responses from 75% of local authorities in England and Wales, providing robust findings which are used by stakeholders across the sector for tracking, benchmarking and planning purposes.

ALARM 2023 reports that local authority highway teams in England and Wales only received around two-thirds of what they needed to stop our local roads from further deterioration and that more than £14 billion - £68,000 for every mile of local road - is now needed to fix the backlog of carriageway repairs.

A copy of the ALARM report can be found at <https://www.grahamfeest.com/resources/latest-uploads/>

# Traffic Safety Roads



## VEHICLE SAFETY ON FARMS NOT SO DIFFERENT FROM THE ROADS

Incidents involving vehicles are the number one cause of deaths and serious injuries on British farms and have been responsible for 30 per cent of all fatalities on farms over the past five years amounting to 48 lives lost with hundreds more hurt in incidents involving moving vehicles on farms every year.

Accordingly, HSE has launched a farm vehicle safety campaign and has created a website [<https://workright.campaign.gov.uk/campaigns/agriculture/>] which brings together lots of great advice on using vehicles safely on farms.



HSE point to three key areas to reduce the risks

- Operating a safe farm,
- Maintaining a safe vehicle
- Being a safe driver.

And provide the following specific guidance

Keep people and vehicles apart:

- Segregate vehicles and people with clearly marked routes and walkways to keep them apart to avoid serious injuries.
- Use barriers and posts in high traffic areas to protect people and save lives.
- Use signage, good lighting and a high visibility clothing to help everyone be seen on the farm.

Maintaining a safe vehicle

- Detect faults and act accordingly
- Regularly check and maintain brakes. Trailers must have brakes designed for the maximum loads and speeds at which they will operate.
- Ensure a seatbelt is fitted and worn every time.
- For vehicles which have doors fitted as standard, make sure the doors are attached securely and remain closed when the vehicle is moving.
- For vehicles that have mirrors fitted as standard, double check they are fitted securely and are clean to ensure optimum visibility.

Being a safe driver

- Pause, take a moment to be a safer driver.
- Use the handbrake every time. To prevent serious injury if your vehicle moves due to the terrain or gradient, follow the simple safe stop routine before you get out or off a vehicle: handbrake on, gears in neutral, engine switched off and the key removed.
- Ensure you've been trained properly.
- Think visibility to protect everyone on the farm, whatever the vehicle - ensure mirrors and windows on the vehicle are clean and when manoeuvring, take a moment to consider where the blind spots are. Keep people away while you are moving, get people to stand where you can see them.

All the things we say to drivers and riders when using the road!



# Traffic Safety Roads

## HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT



**LCRIG** <https://lcrig.org.uk/>

The Local Council Roads Innovation Group (LCRIG) provides a unique platform for its members to engage, providing a vital link between central and local government, supply chain and the wider highways community to ensure ongoing improvements in the highways sector.



LCRIG's mission is to facilitate fresh thinking in innovation and collaboration, whilst also helping the highways community achieve net zero. A community interest company, accredited to ISO 44001, the international standard for collaboration, LCRIG's purpose is to give back, promoting collaboration that will ultimately see improved highway services, maintained to a standard that road users expect and deserve.

As local authorities continue to face funding challenges, LCRIG can offer support to its members and help to facilitate collaboration and discussions which ultimately help to stimulate investment in innovation and technology solutions. Since its inception, LCRIG has been making the case for local roads and continues to drive innovation forward and deliver value.

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**ARRM** <https://www.armor.org.uk/>

ARRM was previously known as AIRSO (the Association of Industrial Road Safety Officers) and was formed in 1965 to provide support for individuals working in the area of road safety; particularly within industry and as a means by which the views among professional colleagues could be exchanged.



The role of Industrial Road Safety Officer no longer exists however, as it was one of the first roles to recognise the risks inherent in driving for work, the Association elected to rebrand as the Association for Road Risk Management and focus its energies on improving safety for those who drive for work or commute.

ARRM is now the home for a broad range of professionals whose work involves improving work-related road safety and the management of occupational road risk.

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**ROADSAFE** <https://www.roadsafe.com/>

RoadSafe is a charitable partnership which brings together private sector with government and road safety professionals with a mission is to reduce road deaths and injuries by supporting and encouraging partnerships between the private sector and road safety professionals to promote the safe system, sharing knowledge, encouraging innovation and recognising achievement.



RoadSafe brings together representatives from government, the vehicle and component manufacturing, insurance and road transport industries, road safety professionals and specialist media, to find new approaches to reducing casualties amongst vulnerable groups.

Currently the only forum which gathers all these representatives together. Launched in October 2001, it has grown from the respected Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards, which have been recognising outstanding achievement and innovation in road safety since 1987.