



Traffic Safety Roads

The Graham Feest Consultancy
Incorporating the UK Road Safety Network

March 2024



Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

50 20 10

50 20 10

50 20 10

Traffic Safety Roads

TRAFFIC SAFETY ROADS (TSR)

collates a range of information and opinion from various sources. Whilst every effort is made to ensure its accuracy the Graham Feest Consultancy cannot be held responsible for any incorrect information provided from third parties or the views expressed by individuals.



Celebrating 2024



GRAHAM FEEST is a road

safety consultant and a CIHT accredited training provider, organising and leading low-cost high value events around the UK; speaking at national, international and local conferences/seminars; organising/conducting workshops both in the UK and overseas; along with providing support and guidance drawing on fifty 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; the immediate past Chair of the National Road Safety Committee and is the current Chair of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving, Road Safety Advisor to the ADI National Joint Council and Road Safety Consultant for the RichWorks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT is extended to the following principal sources of information along with the articles from individual contributors;

AA, ADI National Joint Council, Agilysis, ARRM, CIHT, Clearview Intelligence, Brake, DfT, DIA, DfBB, DVSA, eDriving, ETSC, Fleet News, GEM Motoring Assist, Intelligent Instructor, Hadstrong, Highways Magazine, Highways on Friday, IAM RoadSmart, IHE, IMTD, LAPV, LCRIG, LGA, Living Streets, Logistics UK, London Road Safety Council, MCIA, MSA, National Highways, PACTS, RAC, RHA, RoadSafe, Road Safety GB, Road Safety Scotland, Roadpol, Road Safety Wales, RoSPA, SMMT, Sustrans, TfL, TRL, The RichWorks, Transport Scotland, TRL, Transport Network, UCL etc

Traffic Safety Roads is published by the Graham Feest Consultancy incorporating the UK Road Safety Network

68 The Boulevard, Worthing BN13 1LA
01903 506095 | graham@grahamfeest.com
www.grahamfeest.com

Edition 9 Issue 03 - No.94: March 2024

CONTENT OF THIS ISSUE

- Editorial
- All Change for Project Edward
- Take Your Rubbish Home
- Review of the DVSA
- Amalgamation of Data is Now Essential
- Pavement Parking
- French Roads
- Traffex
- London Overground Lines
- Renewed Calls to Drivers Encountering Horse Riders
- Global Road Deaths Reducing
- Speed and Young Drivers
- Breathalyser Tests
- Safer for Vulnerable Road Users or Not
- Operation Snap Devon & Cornwall
- Welsh Road Safety Consultation
- Consultation on Sentencing Guidelines
- Brake for Your Life
- Vehicles Getting Too Big
- National Highways Chairman
- Criminal Driving Rising
- Awards in the Driver Training Industry
- Pay Per Mile
- Government Issues New E-Scooter & E-Bike Advice
- Wales Speeds Down
- Police Get Clued up on Hands Free Phones
- Pothole Partnership
- Expansion of Trial
- Remove Licence at Roadside
- Take Another Look
- 3D Holograms Could Help See Road Hazards

Front Cover Picture by courtesy of Victoria Palombo photography
Depicting scenes from Valletta, Rabat & Medina - Malta 2024

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

G

EDITORIAL

Readers coming to my newsletter for the first time - I need to explain that the expression 50 20 10 refers to having personally spent 50 years in road safety, twenty years having had my own consultancy and then 10 years that my executive assistant, Victoria has been with me. This gives me time to reflect as I first became involved in my work in 1974 and so I am able to share with you my 50th Anniversary during 2024

Having spent January and February reflecting upon the seventies and eighties we now turn to the nineties which was very much an action packed decade with many new and exciting initiatives which I will by no means tell all this month so this is part one of the nineties.

Early in the 90's there became an emphasis in driver rehabilitation and improvement. The National Driver Improvement Scheme, as it was in those days, arose from some work which Sir Peter North did in 1979 making a statement in "Road Safety the Next Steps" - where he concluded about drivers having crashes - "What was the point in taking them to court giving them a fine adding penalty points and sending them back out to make the same mistake again without making some attempt to help." Devon and Cornwall Police and Devon County Council grasped the nettle and developed an intervention whereby if people attended a course, for which they paid, and successfully completed then no further action would be taken. The trial proved to be both popular and successful and had considerable impact. It was in the early nineties that this then started to take off around the UK.

Mainly at that time being organised and conducted by local authority road safety units with the aide of driver trainers. Northamptonshire, where I was County Road Safety Officer came into the system as fifth authority and as it developed I found myself becoming secretary of the providers network and also responsible through that developing the monitoring arrangements of both classroom and driving instructors. In those days the courses were run over one and half days covering theory and practice. During the nineties the course content became the national model and police forces were content that of you had your crash in their county but lived in another and wanted to do the course nearer to your home you could.

From a road safety perspective the scheme was the first positive step in being able to reach drivers and riders who needed help in a positive way.

These courses still operate today as an option to prosecution if the police consider it a better way of disposing of an offender. It is now known as the National Driver Offenders Retraining Scheme and operates under different guidance and course structure. Regretfully it is now done over one day which is not in my mind as good as it does not give that overnight time for reflection. There are now fewer providers with less Local Authorities involved and more coming from the commercial sector.

Alongside this came, from the Home Office, a proposal that those convicted for Drink Drive should also have the opportunity to learn about drink and its effects and they looked for a number of bodies prepared to develop local pilot courses as a trial. Participants had to be offered the option to attend a course if they so wished at the time of their court appearance and the incentive was that undertaking the course would reduce their ban by 25% on completion. This was a ideal fit for my overall philosophy in the county and so partnered with Northamptonshire Council for Addiction and we were successful in getting pilot status. What became clear was the total lack of understanding people had about the amount they were drinking, what effects it really had, what was a unit of alcohol and that it was not just about how many glasses of something you could have before being over the limit to drive.

Again this is now a nationally recognised course but both of these initiatives were positive steps forward in the 90's

ALL CHANGE FOR PROJECT EDWARD

Project EDWARD has announced the decision to drop the annual week of action in favour of a strategically-planned annual programme of activity.



The new plan will involve members of the EDWARD team working with key partners to agree a year-round schedule of live events, symposiums, webinars, discussions, podcast episodes and online activity.

James Luckhurst founder of project EDWARD said:

“We have long wanted EDWARD’s actions to resonate year round, rather than condensing so much good practice into one short week. Therefore a brand new plan, aligned with the broader road safety calendar, will be published shortly to cover the period April 2024 to March 2025.”

TAKE YOUR RUBBISH HOME

National Highways has launched a new campaign which is supported by the RSPCA and Keep Britain Tidy, is calling on road users to protect wildlife - and help reduce delays - by taking their rubbish home. A survey carried out by National Highways shows that while more than 90% of respondents said they had never discarded litter onto the roadside, more than 60% said they had seen someone else doing it and almost half of the people who took part in the survey were unaware that fruit peel and apple cores count as litter.



The campaign aims to highlight the link between littering and endangering wildlife, with the survey also showing many people are oblivious to the fact that discarded rubbish and fruit can attract animals, with often deadly consequences. The campaign also shows the costs to drivers, highlighting that National Highways has to close down motorway lanes in order to keep litter-pickers safe.

As part of a long-term effort to rid the roadsides and motorway service areas of rubbish, National Highways has run a trial using AI-enabled cameras in conjunction with a local authority that is carrying out enforcement. National Highways has also trialled message signs to reduce motorway littering, used geofencing to send texts to motorists entering laybys where littering is an issue to prompt them to take their litter home, and will be taking part in the upcoming Great British Spring Clean for the ninth year running.

Over the last three years, the RSPCA has received more than 10,000 reports of animals found injured, trapped or dead from discarded litter - that’s nearly 10 reports every day.

The new campaign will feature on radio adverts, roadside billboards, posters at motorway service areas and petrol stations, and on social media.

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

REVIEW OF THE DVSA

The Government has launched an independent review of the DVSA.

The DVSA is responsible for carrying out driving tests, undertaking roadside checks and approving people and centres to carry out MOTs.

The review is part of the wider Cabinet Office public body review programme and will assess DVSA on four criteria: efficiency, efficacy, accountability and governance. With the rise of new vehicle technology and automated vehicles, the review will also ensure DVSA continues to evolve as new technology is rolled out on UK roads. The review will also assess how DVSA works with its wide range of stakeholders within and outside of Government to help keep Britain's roads safe.



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

AMALGAMATION OF DATA IS NOW ESSENTIAL

A new report Data Linkage in Road Safety - authored by Seema Yalamanchili, a general surgeon and a clinical research fellow at the Imperial College London Institute of Global Health Innovation says greater sharing of collision data and medical information about crash victims could lead to a much better understanding of the causes and the costs - human and financial - of death and injury on the roads.

Crash and casualty data is routinely collected by the police who attend most major incidents or are at least made aware of them. It is then published by the DfT through a system called STATS19.

However if injury data collected in the national medical dataset, Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) - and that recorded by the ambulance service and other parties involved in the aftermath of road crashes were combined it could provide a greater insight to incidents. All those working in the road safety arena - not least those involved in health provision, law enforcement, transport policy and vehicle design - would benefit from greater data co-ordination and cross-referencing, the report concludes. The report also says a more co-ordinated approach would help answer some of the questions that are key to reducing road casualties and improving health outcomes, such as:

Steve Gooding, director of the RAC Foundation, said:

“Police investigations of road crashes concentrate on gathering evidence that could lead to a prosecution for causing an incident, rather than exploring the causes of why it happened. Medical data is focused on the condition of the patient on arrival into the health system in order to identify the right treatment rather than capturing the reasons for the nature and severity of their injuries. That's why we need to build a bigger picture of road collisions and their effects from the currently

fragmented data. We should not underestimate the difficulty in getting access to all the data and then joining it together by incident. But nor should we underestimate the possible road safety benefits of doing so. Linking these data-sets would be the sort of analytical activity that a Road Collision Investigation Branch would be expected to pursue in order to develop a well-informed view of the causes, consequences and costs of road-related casualties.”

Furthermore we should also be adding insurance data and incidents which are damage only and separated by a thin line from becoming an injury crash. It time to stop this nonsense claim that such data is commercially sensitive.

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10



PAVEMENT PARKING

What stories keep on hitting the news you may well ask and certainly Pot Holes continues to be well up there but continually issues surrounding Parking on Pavements is trending highly these days with pedestrians in particular become more frustrated with having to walk into the road as the path is blocked by a vehicle.



The Department for Transport (DfT) has refused to say when it will make a decision on giving councils the power to ban pavement parking, amid criticism that it has 'sat on' the issue for over three years.

In England, pavement parking is only banned in London, where councils have powers to exempt certain roads, but a new report published by the Local Government Association (LGA) said powers need to be extended 'to make our streets safer'.

In Scotland, some councils have started to enforce a ban, while a consultation is also set

to take place in Wales on introducing restrictions.

The Government held a consultation, which ended in November 2020, on extending powers in England but an announcement has yet to be made.

In October, the then roads minister, Richard Holden, told local authority traffic managers: 'I promise, I really do, that there will be an answer soon.'

Transport Network asked the DfT when the consultation outcome would be published and why it has been held up but it declined to say.

FRENCH ROADS

3,170 people died on French roads in 2023, according to the provisional figures from the French Road Safety Authority.



In detail, road deaths are down in 2023 for car drivers compared with the previous year, with 1,525 deaths (-40 deaths), as well as for users of motorised two-wheelers, with 707 deaths (-11 deaths). For the third year in a row, the number of cyclists killed has again exceeded the 200-death threshold: 226 in 2023, down 8% on 2022. There was also a significant fall in pedestrian fatalities down 10% to 440.

However the number of deaths rose in the category of motorised personal mobility devices (PMLDs) users, such as scooters, where 42 people were killed (+7%).

All road networks recorded a fall in fatalities in 2023: -7% on motorways, where 273 people died, -2.7% on roads outside built-up areas (1881 fatalities) and -2.2% for roads in built-up areas (1016 fatalities).

Despite a fall in the number of deaths on the motorways, this figure is still 4% up on 2019, the benchmark year for Road Safety rather than 2020 and 2021, when the figures fell below the symbolic 3,000 deaths mark due to travel restrictions linked to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

TRAFFEX

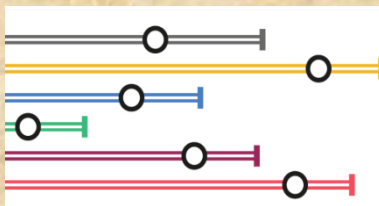
Traffex, the UK's leading traffic and transport event is moving to a new venue this year and parting company with the NEC. The CBS Arena in Coventry is the new home and the two day event will be held on 22nd & 23rd May 2024.

The event is free to attend by registering at <https://www.traffex.com/>



LONDON OVERGROUND LINES

Transport for London is to name the London Overground lines to make the network easier to navigate and aim to complete the changes by the end of 2024.



London Overground will remain as the umbrella brand, keeping the iconic orange roundel.

Each of the 6 routes that make up the London Overground will be given a new name and its own colour.

- Euston to Watford Junction line - will be called the Lioness line - and will be yellow
- Stratford to Richmond/Clapham Junction line - will be called the Mildmay line - and will be blue
- Highbury & Islington to New Cross/Crystal Palace/West Croydon/Clapham Junction line - will be called the Windrush line - and will be red
- Liverpool Street to Cheshunt/Enfield Town/Chingford line - will be called the Weaver line - and will be maroon
- Gospel Oak to Barking Riverside line - will be called the Suffragette line - and will be green
- Romford to Upminster line - will be called the Liberty line - and will be grey

There would appear to be a mixed reaction to the proposal with many questioning the cost and what real value it will bring.

RENEWED CALLS TO DRIVERS ENCOUNTERING HORSE RIDERS

The British Horse Society is calling on all road users to think about how they pass horses. Last year there were 3,383 incidents involving horses on UK roads which resulted in 66 horses dying and 86 being injured. Additionally, three people died, while 94 people were injured.



The data also highlights that 85% of incidents occurred because a vehicle passed by too closely or quickly.

This is despite the introduction of the new Highway Code guidance for equestrians in 2022, which states that vehicles must pass horses at no more than 10mph, while leaving two metres distance.

As part of The British Horse Society's Dead Slow road safety campaign, the equine charity is calling for all road users to evaluate how they pass horses - as well as how impactful passing horses too quickly and closely can be.

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

GLOBAL ROAD DEATHS REDUCING

Road traffic deaths across the world have fallen by five percent to 1.19 million according to the World Health Organization.

The Global Status Report on Road Safety 2023 also reveals that with more than two deaths occurring per minute and over 3,200 per day, road traffic crashes are still the leading killer of children and youth aged 5-29 years.

53 percent of all road traffic fatalities are vulnerable road users including: pedestrians, riders of powered two- and three-wheelers including motorcycles, cyclists and users of micro-mobility devices such as e-scooters. Deaths among car and other four-wheeled light vehicle occupants fell slightly to 30 per cent of global fatalities.

Belarus, Brunei Darussalam, Denmark, Japan, Lithuania, Norway, the Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Emirates and Venezuela all succeeded in reducing road traffic deaths by over 50 per cent.

In all 28 percent of global road traffic deaths occurred in the South-East Asia Region, 25 percent in the Western Pacific Region, 19 percent in the African Region, 12 per cent in the Region of the Americas, 11 per cent in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and five per cent in the European Region.

SPEED AND YOUNG DRIVERS

THINK! has relaunched a campaign 'Is pushing it worth it?' which urges young, male drivers to think about the dangers of driving too fast for road conditions - especially on rural roads.

Male drivers aged 17-24 are over-represented in speed-related deaths and injuries and the campaign highlights the consequences of driving too fast for the conditions, and champions those who respect the road and get there safely.

Data indicates that the wrong/excessive speed kills and injures 58 young people every week. Despite this research highlights that only 32% of young men consider it very risky.



BREATHALYSER TESTS

Recent figures show police forces in England and Wales breathalysed 249,542 motorists in 2022 - an increase of 8% compared with the previous year.



The data, highlighted by breathalyser firm AlcoSense, represents the first year-on-year increase in the number of breath tests since the year ending December 2012. However, the volume of breath tests remains well below the peak of 647,380 breath tests in 2009. It also shows nearly 17% of drivers were over the limit - similar to the previous two years.

Alcosense has welcomed the increase in roadside breath tests, following the recent increase in alcohol related deaths. In 2021, there were 260 deaths on Britain's roads where a motorist was over the drink drive limit - the highest since 2009. In total, the DfT figures estimate a total of 6,740 people were killed or injured in drink drive collisions that year.

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

SAFER FOR VULNERABLE ROAD USERS OR NOT

Half of drivers question whether changes to the Highway code - made two years ago - have made the roads safer for pedestrians according to the findings of a recent survey.

The changes, which came into effect on 29th January 2022 created a new hierarchy of road users. The hierarchy means drivers of quicker or heavier modes of travel have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger they may pose whilst supposedly giving added protection and safety to the more vulnerable. One of the most notable changes was to advise drivers turning into or out of a junction to give way to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders who are either crossing or are waiting to cross the road.

According to the survey, published as part of the RAC's Report on Motoring, 51% feel unsure if the Highway Code changes have made any difference - while only a fifth (18%) of respondents believe the new rules have increased pedestrian safety.

Meanwhile a third (31%) think pedestrians face even greater danger at junctions since the measures were published.

The RAC believes the message 'simply hasn't got through to drivers'. While Highway Code Rule 170 states drivers should give way to

pedestrians when turning in or out of junctions, less than a quarter (23%) of respondents said they always do.

Nearly half (48%) say they give way most of the time but a fifth (19%) admit they don't stop very often while 6% never do.

When the same pool of respondents were asked if, as pedestrians, they notice other drivers stopping to give way, just 2% said they see others stop all the time, while two-thirds (65%) said drivers rarely or never stop for them.



The findings correlate with a report from the Government's Public Accounts Committee which, in November 2023, declared that messaging around the changes had not been communicated effectively enough to encourage public participation.

We do have to find alternative methods to communicate any changes in rules and laws to the wider population. The Highway Code is not the go to book for bedside reading unless you are either within a profession needing to know chapter and verse or you are currently studying for some driving test. We have to acknowledge that the Code is a reference book and whilst the latest edition sits on my shelf - I will go to it when I get asked something and what to check that my answer is not in contradiction to what it states.

OPERATION SNAP - DEVON & CORNWALL

More than 6,000 videos were submitted to Devon & Cornwall Police via Op Snap throughout 2023, making it the busiest year in the operation's history. Op Snap, which was set up in the region in 2019, allows members of the public to submit video evidence of driving offences through an online portal. Footage can be submitted from numerous sources, whether it's a dashcam, helmet camera, mobile phone or even a video doorbell.

Since 2019, Devon & Cornwall Police has taken action against almost 10,000 motorists through Op Snap - all thanks to vigilant members of the public.

WELSH ROAD SAFETY CONSULTATION

Public Health Wales have responded to the Welsh Government's Consultation with regard to the measures which should be included in the principalities new Road Safety Strategy and calls for a strategy that focuses on public health, addresses inequalities in the harm that result from the road traffic environment and prioritises walking, cycling and public transport.

It is promoting within its response that a system of graduated driver licensing (GDL) should be introduced which it says would save lives. It describes GDL as a system designed to help new drivers of motor vehicles gain experience and skills gradually over time in low-risk environments. It says a wide range of measures could be considered within a GDL, but options may include a period when newly qualified drivers under the age of 25 years are not permitted to give lifts to other young people and are not permitted to drive late at night. Public Health Wales' position statement for a GDL also recommends a night time driving restriction and a drink drive limit of 20mg per 100ml of blood.

It also recommends that pedestrian crossing wait times should be cut while time allowed to cross should be extended. Other specific policy proposals included ensuring that cycling infrastructure should be clearly separated from other motor vehicles and that 'paint only' is not acceptable.

They also outline its belief that a social marketing campaign should be undertaken to improve understanding of who pays for the roads (everyone through taxation, not just drivers) and who has priority in the road space (the most vulnerable road users, not drivers).

The consultation closed on 31st January 2024 from which a Road Safety Strategy for Wales will be determined.

CONSULTATION ON SENTENCING GUIDELINES

The Sentencing Council is consulting on six new and revised sentencing guidelines for motoring offences in England and Wales. The draft guidelines cover offences committed by people driving vehicles without the owner's consent, vehicle registration fraud and driver disqualification.

There are currently sentencing guidelines for magistrates' courts for aggravated vehicle taking offences involving accident causing injury, dangerous driving and causing damage to vehicle/property published in 2008, but no guidance for Crown Court. The proposed guidelines will apply to both magistrates' courts and the Crown Court and include

- Aggravated vehicle taking - injury caused
- Aggravated vehicle taking - dangerous driving
- Aggravated vehicle taking - vehicle/property damage caused
- Aggravated vehicle taking - death caused
- Vehicle registration fraud guideline
- Overarching guideline for driver disqualification

The Council is seeking views on the draft guidelines from judges, magistrates and organisations or members of the public with an interest in this area. Find more about the consultation at <https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/news/item/consultation-on-proposed-guidelines-for-aggravated-vehicle-taking-and-other-motoring-offences/> The consultation runs from 21st February 2024 to 22nd May 2024.

BRAKE FOR YOUR LIFE



A new campaign by the British Superbike School with regard to braking a motorcycle from high speed in the shortest distance requires skill, training and practice. Thus their campaign 'Brake for your Life' notes that 'injuries are in general proportional to the impact speed' - and that avoiding or lowering the speed of impact would result in less chance of fatalities or serious life-changing injuries occurring and yet high speed braking is not covered in licence tests.



The campaign calls on all motorcycle trainers, whether learner, post-test or advanced to consider including braking from higher speeds, to try ensure as many riders as possible can stop effectively from at least 60mph.

Mike Abbott, British Superbike School, said: "Motorcycle injury stats have plateaued over the last five years, and with no obvious new safety initiatives in the wings, this would seem an ideal opportunity for a change of emphasis. As riders and a training industry we can help ourselves. All motorcycle trainers, whether learner, post-test or advanced, are asked to consider including braking from higher speeds, to try ensure as many riders as possible can stop effectively from at least 60mph. Injuries are in general proportional to the impact speed. Clearly in avoiding or lowering the speed of impact, there is less chance of fatalities or serious life-changing injuries. This also depends on hazard perception - which has been part of the licence test for many years - and reaction time."

Find out more about the campaign at <https://britishsuperbikeschool.com/motorcyclists-brake-for-your-life/>

VEHICLES ARE GETTING TOO BIG



According to research conducted by the automotive advocacy group Transport & Environment (T&E), new cars in Europe are becoming 1 centimetre larger on average every two years and the trend is likely to continue because SUV sales are increasing throughout the continent, including in the UK.



According to T&E's study on new cars, the average width increased from 177.8 cm in 2018 to 180.3 cm in the first half of 2023.

In many nations, including the UK, the minimum on-street parking spot and the marked parking bays in cars parks are already too narrow for about half of newly acquired cars. Infrastructure including roads and parking areas are just not big enough for the ever expanding widths of cars.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS CHAIRMAN



Sir Gareth Rhys Williams has been appointed by the transport secretary as the new National Highways chair.

He previously worked at the Cabinet Office and brings extensive private and public sector experience, having been the Government's chief commercial officer for the past eight years.

CRIMINAL DRIVING RISES

The latest official figures imply that speeding and drivers using a mobile phone continue to rise. Also failure to obey road signs and notices is also up according the last available statistics for 2022



In 2022 a record-breaking number of speeding fines were issued, while drivers caught using a mobile phone behind the wheel also increased significantly. More than 2.5 million drivers faced a fixed penalty, a driver awareness course or ended up in court.

When it comes to the ongoing problem of mobile phone use behind the wheel, it's only getting worse. Tougher laws on mobile phone use while driving introduced in March 2022, appear to be failing to stem the problem. The number of drivers falling foul of the legislation rose by 93% year-on-year despite academic research showing that using 'hands free' phones is equally as dangerous, despite being legal.

The Home Office data also highlights how, with changes in the Highway Code in January 2022, which introduced a hierarchy of road users and better protections for pedestrians, saw offences for neglecting pedestrian rights

and traffic signs increase by a third compared to 2021. That comes after recent research from the RAC showed that a third (31%) of drivers think pedestrians face even greater danger at junctions after the changes to the Highway Code were meant to improve safety.

Ways of catching errant motorists has also changed, adding to the figures. The vast majority of fines are issued by police officers catching people in the act and official enforcement cameras. However, the rise of dashcams in cars, as well as cameras used by cyclists and horse riders, are helping capture bad driving through Operation Snap.

AWARDS IN THE DRIVER TRAINING INDUSTRY

The winners of the Intelligent Instructor Awards 2024: the very best in class in the driver training industry, spanning instructors, driving schools, and suppliers to the industry have been announced. The Intelligent Instructor Awards in association with AcciDON'T Driving School received over 8,000 public votes this year from driving instructors! The public ranking was combined with the independent judging panel's ranking, to determine our worthy winners.

- Driving Instructor Insurer of the Year - Adrian Flux Insurance Services
- Product of the Year- Driving Theory Test 4 in 1 Kit
- Training Provider of the Year - RED Driver Training
- Professional Support Provider of the Year - MyDriveTime
- Car Supplier of the Year - Dualdrive
- Driving Instructor Car of the Year - Toyota Yaris
- Local Driving Instructor Association of the Year - Wirral Association of Professional Driving Instructors
- Community Champion of the Year - SmartLearner Driving School
- Green Driving School of the Year - Vicky's Driving Tuition
- Regional Driving School of the Year - Lesson Plus Driving School
- National Driving School of the Year - Bill Plant Driving School
- National Driving Instructor of the Year - Peter Skelton
- Services to the Driver Training Industry Award - Louise Walsh.



PAY PER MILE

There would appear to be a vast difference and perhaps changing of public opinion to the idea that VED and tax on fuel should be replaced by a pay per mile charge. Seen as a much fairer way of people using the roads more should pay more for the privilege whilst supporting those who use their vehicles less should have the benefit seem a while ago to be well supported.

However from a recent survey conducted by The Express the majority of drivers seem now to reject a pay-per-mile system. Data from the Express poll found the majority of drivers surveyed did not support fees calculated based on mileage instead of vehicle emissions. Under current rules, vehicles are charged more money based on how much they pollute the atmosphere.

Road pricing is understood to be a possible successor to VED fees as more motorists switch to electric vehicles but the survey of over 10,000 Express readers found there was little support for such a scheme with 62%+ of motorists rejecting any such proposal. Less than one-third of respondents now back the proposal while around 2.43 percent said they didn't know. How relevant such a small survey is given that we have upwards of 50million licence holders is another question.

Road pricing has been looked into by the Transport Committee which launched a consultation on it back in 2020. The Committee explained that the Government "must start an honest conversation with the public on the funding" for roads if there is decreased VED and fuel duty income as more switch to EVs. The MPs recommended that a road pricing system using telematic tools to monitor mileage should be introduced.

GOVERNMENT ISSUES NEW E-SCOOTER AND E-BIKE SAFETY ADVICE

New guidance has been issued by the Department for Transport (DfT) on how to buy, store and charge e-cycles and e-scooters safely. It also reminds people that e-scooters cannot be used legally on roads unless they are part of an official rental trial. Separate guidance has also been issued to help public transport operators assess and manage fire risks associated with the carriage of e-bikes and e-scooters on trains and buses. Similar information has been produced for those managing premises such as schools and workplaces.



To further understand the safety of the lithium-ion batteries used in e-cycles and e-scooters, the Office for Product Safety and Standard (OPSS) is currently conducting a safety study and taking enforcement action where unsafe products are found.

Technology and decarbonisation minister, Anthony Browne, said:

"Safety has always been our top priority, which is why our latest guidance aims to improve the awareness of e-bike and e-scooter users in the trial areas where they're authorised. The DfT also says that the extension of e-scooter trials until May 2026 will also enable us to build on current learning across areas including usage, safety and environmental impacts, and to explore changing travel patterns since the Covid-19 pandemic."

Transport for London (TfL) banned all privately-owned e-scooters from London's transport network in December 2021. The decision was driven by safety concerns following fires on TfL premises and services.

Traffic Safety Roads

Celebrating 2024

50 20 10

WALES SPEEDS DOWN

Traffic speeds on roads in Wales has fallen by 2.4mph since the introduction of the country's default 20mph speed limit and builds on previous analysis, which showed there was a 2.9mph drop in speeds in the immediate aftermath of the change.

A report, carried out by Agilysis, analysed speeds on nearly 500km of roads in ten Welsh towns and cities. It covers the three-month period post-introduction on 17 September 2023 and says the figures show that while there has been a small increase in speeds since the initial survey, compliance with the new 20mph limits is 'generally good and shows a general acceptance of the new limit among drivers'. The report also shows there are slight variations across the ten towns and cities included in the analysis, with Bangor experiencing the most significant reduction in average speeds (-3.2mph) and Merthyr Tydfil displaying the smallest change (-1.3mph).



Just over half (52.9%) of all analysed journeys were driven above the 20mph speed limit, while 17.9% were driven above the enforcement threshold of 26mph. A total of 5.4% of journeys were driven at speeds above the threshold for a court summons.

The Welsh Government recently confirmed the enforcement of 20mph speed limits has begun following initial adjustment period.

Summary of the results:

	Average Speed Before 20mph	Average Speed 1 Week After 20mph	Average Speed 3 Months After 20mph	Change (MPH)
Bangor	22.0	18.7	18.8	-3.2
Cardiff	22.6	19.7	20.3	-2.2
Haverfordwest	22.9	19.8	20.9	-2.0
Lampeter	23.7	20.5	21.2	-2.5
Merthyr Tydfil	22.2	20.9	20.9	-1.3
Newport	22.8	19.5	20.3	-2.5
Newtown	21.2	18.6	18.6	-2.6
Rhyl & Prestatyn	23.2	19.6	20.4	-2.8
Swansea	22.1	20.5	20.5	-1.7
Wrexham	23.2	19.6	20.4	-2.8
Wales Average	22.7	19.8	20.3	-2.4

It is however understood that some of the roads which were reduced from 30mph to 20mph might well return. Wales' transport minister, Lee Waters has promised the public they will be able to take part in a review of the 20mph speed limit and has said if you feel your street should return to 30mph you can let your council know why. A letter to councils said the review, which is looking at how the policy has been implemented, will make initial recommendations in the near.

POLICE GET CLUED UP ON HANDS FREE PHONES

An Open University project aimed at informing police officers about the dangers of driving while using a hands-free phone, resulted in a dramatic change in attitudes to their use.

The project called “We need to talk about hands-free”, was funded by The Road Safety Trust, and involved fellow academics from the Universities of Staffordshire and Keele.

While hands-free mobile phone use by drivers is not illegal, a vast body of research has shown it is no safer than hand-held phone use. Existing research shows drivers using either a hand-held or a hands-free phone are four times more likely to be involved in a collision, often fail to notice hazards - even when they appear directly ahead of them - and take longer to react to any hazards they do notice.

This latest project was aimed at police officers, who are at the frontline of dealing with the devastation that distracted driving can cause, to ensure they are fully informed. There were 470 officers from England and Wales that took part in an interactive video task designed by researchers at the Open University (OU). Having watched the interactive video, officer attitudes to the safety of legal hands-free mobile phone use by drivers dramatically changed, with 88% reporting that, in future encounters with phone-using drivers, they would explain the dangers of all phone use, not just hand-held use.



The NPCC is currently running a campaign, which lasts until 10th March 2024, to crackdown on people being distracted by their mobile phone whilst driving.

Ruth Purdie, chief executive of The Road Safety Trust, said:

“Evidence shows that hands-free is as dangerous as physically using a mobile phone. The cognitive distraction can increase crash risk, reduce hazard detection, and lead to poor situational awareness. Therefore, it is vital, as this report highlights, that police officers are not recommending hands-free as a safe alternative to illegally using a hand-held device. We hope this project can shine a light on the issue and provide officers the guidance they need when encountering offenders.”

Dr Helen Wells of Keele University, senior lecturer in criminology, who was also involved in the research, said:

When a police officer stops someone for using their mobile phone illegally, they have an opportunity to give safe or unsafe advice to a driver. Our project means that more officers will now give advice that will keep drivers safe, not just keep them out of trouble with the law.”

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

POTHOLE PARTNERSHIP

A new partnership has been launched between road users and industry to help tackle the rise in potholes as new figures from the AA show pothole damage to vehicles has hit a five year high. The coalition represents the interests of drivers, motorcyclists, cyclists, pedestrians, and road repairers and includes AA, the National Motorcyclists Council, British Cycling, IAM RoadSmart, the British Motorcyclists Federation and manufacturer JCB.



The newly-formed Pothole Partnership has unveiled a new five-point plan to help tackle the issue.

- **Permanent:** Local authorities to limit the practice of temporary pothole repairs or patches and, where possible, every pothole or patch to be repaired permanently.
- **Precise:** All local authorities / contractors to adhere to UK-wide repair and inspection standards, and report annually on the repairs undertaken.
- **Price:** Government to demonstrate greater urgency by accelerating and increasing spending of the £8.3bn pothole funding for England in the first three years - with total clarity on the distribution to local authorities.
- **Provision:** Central and local government to guarantee ringfencing of ALL road maintenance funding to help deliver innovations that enable permanent repairs.
- **Progress:** Full transparency from local authorities on their roads repair backlog, categorised by potholes, patching works and road resurfacing.

The Partnership has welcomed extra funding for maintenance including the £8.3bn from HS2 but wants it ring-fenced and expenditure increased in the early years and used more effectively. It is often a false economy to just patch potholes when that stretch of road needs resurfacing.

EXPANSION OF TRIAL

Trials of new cameras capable of identifying drivers who are not wearing a seatbelt or using a mobile phone while driving is to be expanded. The new type of technology captures footage of passing motorists and the images are then processed using artificial intelligence (AI) to analyse whether the motorists could be using a handheld mobile phone or not wearing a seat belt.

Drivers can be fined up to £500 for not wearing a seatbelt in addition to penalty points. While using a mobile phone while driving can result in a fine of up to £1,000 and six penalty points.

National Highways began trialling the technology in 2021, while Devon and Cornwall Police deployed the technology in 2022. During the first couple of weeks, almost 600 people were caught by police not wearing seatbelts on Devon and Cornwall roads. The cameras caught 590 people not wearing seatbelts and 40 people driving while using a mobile phone.

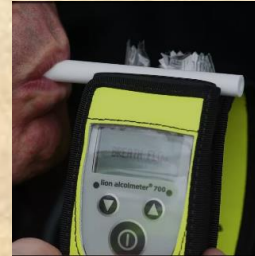


Ten police forces taking part in the expanded trial set to run until March 2025 are: Durham, Greater Manchester Police, Humberside, Staffordshire, West Mercia, Northamptonshire, Wiltshire, Norfolk; Thames Valley Police and Sussex.

REMOVE LICENCE AT THE ROADSIDE

Chief Constable Jo Shiner, the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) lead for roads policing is calling for new powers to allow officers to instantly disqualify drink or drug-drivers at the roadside so they can remove people from the roads who pose a risk to others off the road "immediately".

Currently, drivers charged with drug or drink-driving offences are banned following a sentencing hearing at a magistrates' court. However, these hearings can take weeks to get to court - and until then, drivers are allowed to continue driving. The current system means that drivers are checked using a road-side test, which if positive, is followed by a confirmatory test at a police station. If that second test comes back positive, they are charged and sent to court.



Chief Constables throughout the country are currently in early discussions looking at the type of tests that could be used to allow officers to ban people at the roadside and also the legal changes needed to make the move possible.

TAKE ANOTHER LOOK

Supported by leading road safety bodies including Motorcycle Law Scotland, IAM RoadSmart, BMF, MAG, Biker Down and Road Peace "Take Another Look" is a campaign launch in Scotland but just as relevant in all parts of the UK.



Tracey Marsh, Maureen Rutherford and Jacqueline Dickson tragically lost their husbands in road traffic collisions on Scotland's roads. All three men were experienced motorcyclists, but their lives were cut short because a motorist failed to 'take another look' at a junction. These were cases of 'carelessness' according to the courts which subsequently convicted the drivers. Now Tracey, Maureen and Jacqueline have launched this campaign to urge drivers to look again at every junction.

Evidence from both criminal and civil proceedings shows that many motorcyclists have met similar fates or suffered life changing injuries because motorist fail to take a second look to ensure it is safe to proceed. I guess this is very much the sister to "Think Once Think Twice Think Bike" Despite this however authorities continue to put the emphasis on improving rider behaviour at the exclusion of all else. Find out more about the campaign at <http://www.takeanotherlook.co.uk/>

3D HOLOGRAMS COULD HELP SEE ROAD HAZARDS

New research has led to an augmented reality head-up display that could improve road safety. Doctoral student, Jana Skirnewskaja, supported by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), is developing new in-car technology that could help drivers see hazards.

The new system can effectively 'see through' objects to project holographic representations of road obstacles that are hidden from the driver's field of view, aligned with the real object in size and distance. For example, a road sign blocked from view by a large truck would appear as a 3D hologram so that the driver knows exactly where the sign is and what information it displays.

Keep an eye on this as the project develops.