

Traffic Safety Roads

The Graham Feest Consultancy
Incorporating the UK Road Safety Network

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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.



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 Road Smart; the immediate past Chair of the National Road Safety Committee and is the current President of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving, Road Safety Advisor to the ADI National Joint Council and Road Safety Consultant for the RichWorks.

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Matching the old with the new

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CHANGING SPEED LIMITS ON SCOTTISH ROADS

There is now only until 5th March 2025 to respond to a consultation which, if approved, will see major changes introduced to speed limits on Scottish roads and there is no reason why England and Wales should not go the same way if benefits from such a move were to prove successful.

Under the proposals for Scotland, drivers would see the national speed limit on single-carriageway roads reduced for cars to 50mph while HGVs would be permitted higher speeds of 50mph on single-carriageways and 60mph on dual-carriageways.



The move aims to decrease collision rates while also promoting safer speeds that better reflect the state of roads in Scotland. It is estimated that the lower speed limits would also reduce fatalities by at least four people per year and at the same time reduce congestion by removing mixed speed limits for different vehicles.

INSTITUTE OF MASTER TUTORS OF DRIVING (IMTD)

The Institute are calling for nominations for their awards for 2025 which after due consideration will be made in September and all nominations have to be in by the end of June.



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. 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. More information and how to nominate can be found at <https://imtd.org.uk/imtd-awards/>

REMOVING MOT EXEMPTIONS

The government is considering a major change to MOT regulations, which could see thousands of classic car owners facing new inspection requirements. Currently, vehicles over 40 years old are exempt from the annual MOT test, based on the assumption that they are well-maintained and rarely used. However, a new proposal could reverse this exemption, requiring vintage vehicles to undergo safety checks for the first time in decades.

This change could affect more than 340,000 classic car owners, many of whom have long relied on the exemption to keep their historic vehicles road-legal without the costs and requirements of annual testing. While some classic car enthusiasts welcome the idea of age-appropriate safety checks, others argue that these vehicles are already well cared for and that the additional regulations would be unnecessary and costly. With the new rules potentially coming into effect in 2025, the debate over how to balance historical preservation and road safety is heating up.



The Department for Transport (DfT) has launched a consultation on whether the current MOT exemption for classic cars remains appropriate. Under the existing system, vehicles over 40 years old are not required to pass an MOT test, unlike modern cars, which must be inspected annually to ensure they meet road safety and environmental standards. However, when it comes to introducing something on safety grounds many people consider that there should not be an exemptions un less of course such vehicles are not driven on the road.

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MAJOR M25 PROJECT COMPLETION DELAYED BY 'EXTREME WEATHER'

The £317 million M25 project to improve Junction 10 of the motorway in Surrey, initially scheduled to end this summer, will now not finish until spring next year due to extreme weather according to National Highways.

The project, which started in summer 2022, will increase the number of lanes at Junction 10, which is one of the UK's busiest motorway junctions.

National Highways also announced it will close the motorway for two out of three weekends in March to allow the demolition and removal of two old bridges as part of the scheme. Accordingly, the M25 will be closed between Junctions 10 and 11 from 9pm on Friday 7th March and 6am on Monday 10th March and again over the same period a fortnight later Friday 21st March and Monday 24th 2025.

Friday 7th March
to
Monday 10th March

Friday 21st March
to
Monday 24th March

E-SCOOTER CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

A wide-ranging research project into e-scooter construction standards, conducted by TRL and the Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG), from the University of Warwick has been published providing guidance to the DfT on certain aspects of technical regulations that may in future be applied to e-scooters if their use in public places is to be made legal.

Among the key recommendations of the research are that e-scooters should be fitted with a system that limits their maximum speed 'which cannot be easily defeated'.

The report also recommends that the Government adopts practical performance-based tests for e-scooter stability based on those currently applied in Germany under the eKFV approval system.

In the UK, while the sale of e-scooters is permitted, it remains illegal to use them on public roads and paths. Rental e-scooter trials are taking place across the country, including in cities such as London and the report notes that there is 'no strong case' to support different technical regulations for rental and privately owned e-scooters.



The report also touches upon the controversial subject on riding on pavements. It says that permitting e-scooters to be used on footways 'will bring clear accessibility benefits for those with mobility impairments. However, it adds that 'there are legitimate concerns that permitting e-scooters to be ridden on the footway will inevitably bring them into conflict with pedestrians, likely resulting in collisions.

Other recommendations cover issues such as weight, acceleration and battery requirements.

The Government have indicated that they would bring forward legislation during this year with regard to legalising privately owned e-scooter being permitted on the road but we have yet to hear anything.

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

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DRIVING THROUGH FLOOD WATER

A recent survey conducted by Go.Compare car insurance, explored drivers' attitudes towards navigating through floodwater and the potential hazards involved and has revealed that 17% of UK drivers - equivalent to 5.8 million motorists - would risk driving through floodwater. Men and middle-aged drivers are the most likely to take this gamble.



Men were found to be almost twice as likely as women to attempt driving through floodwater, with 22% of male drivers admitting they would do so compared to just 12% of female drivers. Meanwhile, middle-aged drivers (aged 40 to 59) were the most likely age group to take the risk.

It would therefore appear that nearly two-thirds (62%) of drivers may unknowingly put themselves at risk by attempting to cross what appears to be a shallow pool of water, but is, in fact, a hazardous flooded road.

While 38% of respondents said they would only drive through water less than 10cm deep (generally considered safe), 42% stated they would risk depths of between 10cm and 20cm. At these depths, vehicles - particularly smaller ones - can experience loss of control or sustain serious damage.

15% admitted they would attempt to drive through floodwater up to 30cm deep, a level that can cause severe engine damage, interior flooding, or even floating and around one in 20 drivers would risk crossing water deeper than 30cm, which dramatically increases the likelihood of vehicles being swept away.



DATA SUSTAINS LIFE PROJECT

TRL has partnered with University Hospital Southampton have been awarded £500,000 by the Department for Transport and the Road Safety Trust to launch a two-year innovative 'Data Sustains Life' project aimed to reduce road deaths by linking health records and road traffic collision data.

Data Sustains Life aims to 'anonymously integrate wide-ranging data insights, providing a holistic view of the causes and consequences of road crashes in the UK'. It will explore the relationship between road crashes and the resulting health outcomes, co-ordinating the efforts of both the healthcare and transport sectors.



The initiative links data from ambulances, air ambulances, police, the Department for Transport and coroners, as well as the many interactions flowing through hospitals. This includes emergency care, intensive care, trauma care and rehabilitation registries and will have its focus on the counties of Dorset and Hampshire as well as the Thames Valley region, including London.

It aims to unlock patient data to develop new treatments and improve NHS efficiency, effectiveness and safety. The findings are expected to inform both national road safety policies and global best practices.

TRL said that the process will be capable of being scaled in other regions and nationally with investment from statutory authorities.

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DRUG DRIVING

One in two motorists pulled over by the police on suspicion of drug driving are failing roadside drug tests, new data has revealed following a Freedom of Information (FOI) request submitted to all 45 police forces in the UK, with 31 forces – including the Metropolitan Police – responding to the inquiry which showed that 51 per cent of drivers stopped on suspicion of drug driving tested positive during 2023, with 49 per cent failing in the first seven months of 2024. Department for Transport (DfT) figures show that the number of deceased drivers who had “impairment drugs” in their bodies at the time of death has increased by more than 70 per cent for the period from 2014 through to 2022.



The most common time for catching drug driving offenders is, as one might expect, during the two main “party seasons” of the year – in summer, around the time of big festivals, and at Christmas. At these times of year, a nationwide policing scheme called Operation Limit is conducted in order to reduce instances of both drink and drug driving. Police traffic officers do not need a reason to stop a vehicle, but they must have a “reasonable suspicion” that the motorist is under the influence of drugs before asking them to submit to a roadside drug test. These include a swab, which can deduce on the spot whether motorists have recently taken cannabis or cocaine. This test was introduced in 2015, but some forces only started recording data in 2023, which means the actual number of drivers with drugs detected is likely to be much higher.

“Impairment drugs” fall into three main categories:

- psychoactive medications, such as benzodiazepines;
- psychoactive drugs that could be prescribed, abused or used in emergency medical treatment, such as morphine, alfentanil, fentanyl or ketamine;
- drugs that are prone to abuse, such as cocaine and LSD, which have no medical use according to The Misuse of Drugs Regulations 2001.

Police Scotland recorded the most failed roadside drug-driving tests in December 2023 and January 2024, with 526 offenders. Greater Manchester Police had the next highest figures, with 397 failing the tests, and Surrey Police followed with 368.

William Porter, IAM RoadSmart’s policy manager said

“The fact that one in two motorists are failing roadside drugs tests shows that the message about the dangers of drug driving is not getting through.

Separate research by IAM RoadSmart indicates that one in seven (16 per cent) drivers aged 17-34 admitted to getting behind the wheel after taking class A drugs, indicating how vital it is to tackle this growing epidemic.

We urgently need a new approach to combat drug-driving which focuses on both greater enforcement and establishing rehabilitation courses to reduce re-offending. The evidence shows that those taking equivalent drink-drive courses are almost three times less likely to re-offend than those who don’t and Ministers must consider expanding similar courses to those with drug-driving convictions.”

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BUS LANE CONFUSION

It is estimated that for whatever reason drivers pick up a fixed penalty every three years - some will be for law-breaking motoring offences such as speeding, not wearing a seat belt or using a hand-held device. Other reasons which include things such as parking infringements are frustrating and seen by many as a means of the authorities just to make money. Bus Lanes also appear in the list and from a survey by the RAC which has found not surprisingly that drivers are being unwittingly caught out by 'confusing' bus lanes with more than a third saying they have inadvertently driven in one with 42% caught on camera and asked to pay a fine.



An overwhelming majority (85%) want to see councils issue a warning letter the first time someone is caught driving in a bus lane, rather than an instant fine.

The RAC has long argued that few drivers deliberately choose to drive in bus lanes - something the survey has confirmed with only 4% admitting to doing that - and that drivers either miss the signage or are confused by it.

Among drivers who have bus lanes operating only at certain times of the day in their areas, well over half (56%) believe the signage is inadequate. A third (33%) say signs are not easy to spot while driving and not easy to understand, while 23% say the signs are visible enough but not easy to understand. In terms of why drivers think bus lane signs are hard to spot and/or understand, 85% say it's because there is too much information to read and take in about the hours of operation, all while they're trying to drive safely. Three-in-ten (29%) feel there aren't enough signs advising a bus lane is ahead and a quarter (26%) claim the signage is too small.

The RAC have concluded in a statement:

"We have always maintained that the majority of drivers don't deliberately set out to drive in bus lanes, so it's good to see this research confirming that. Our suspicions around the visibility and clarity of bus lane signage have also been borne out, with drivers expressing considerable concerns about signs often being hard to spot and difficult to understand.

Bus lanes are more common in urban environments where the driver's job in spotting and comprehending bus lane signage is arguably even harder. There is so much else to take in, from vehicles and other road users to traffic lights and warning signs.

For these reasons, we continue to call on councils to write to drivers who stray into bus lanes the first time, rather than simply issuing them with fines. While it's fair that anyone who deliberately drives in bus lanes should expect to be fined, our research shows that far too many drivers end up doing so unwittingly,

most probably because the signage really isn't good enough. This can be despite bus lane signage almost certainly meeting government guidelines.

We therefore feel there's a good case for this guidance to be updated. Our findings suggest the quality and frequency of signage is a big part of why so many drivers fall foul of bus lanes and it appears there is a very unfortunate knock-on effect for bus lanes that only operate at certain times of day, with drivers not using them even when they're allowed to. This seems to be for a combination of reasons ranging from an inherent fear of being fined to just not being sure of what the signs say. We have a great deal of sympathy for drivers because there is a lot of information to process when you're at the wheel of a car doing your best to drive safely. It is also worth noting that failing to use the available road space to its full capacity can have a detrimental impact on traffic flow."

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20MPH SPEED LIMIT SUCCESS CONTINUES

In the first year default 20mph speed limit being introduced in Wales around 100 fewer people have been killed or seriously injured on 20mph and 30mph roads according to the Welsh Government. Looking specifically at the period between July and September 2024, the number of casualties on roads with 20mph and 30mph road speed limits (combined) was the lowest Q3 figure since records began - and 35% lower than in the same quarter in 2023.

The default 20mph speed limit was introduced on 17 September 2023 and in terms of casualty reduction is proving to be a success. Whilst not altogether popular amongst the population the Government continues to build on the consensus that where 20mph is the right speed it works well.

PARKING FOR THE OVER 70's

Older motorists regularly visiting St Albans City can apply for a new 'Access Permit' under a new scheme whereby they pay a one off £190 per annum charge which will allow them to park in any of the 15 off street car parks in in St Albans and Harpenden and will include access to the Civic Centre subject to availability. For some this will be quite a saving but not everyone as it will depend upon how much and many times you need to use the city centre.

Some restrictions will apply with the permit only able to be used for one visit per day for up to three hours at a time. The Council have stated that the new Access Permit was a fairly price and described it as an "innovative" move

PEDICABS

Transport for London (TfL) is inviting people to have their say on proposals to regulate pedicabs in London for the first time.

Pedicabs are the only form of unregulated public transport in London, and this has led to inconsistencies in the way services operate. TfL says there is a need to ensure any regulations prioritise the safety of passengers and pedestrians and minimise fare issues as well as anti-social behaviour caused by loud music and poor driving.

TfL is seeking views on several proposals, including that:



- All pedicab drivers would be required to have a one-year pedicab driver's licence and would need to meet a set of safety standards such as criminal backgrounds checks
- Drivers would need to demonstrate they understand their role and responsibilities
- Drivers would be required to have appropriate insurance
- Regular vehicle inspections would be required to check the condition of the vehicle to ensure it remains safe and roadworthy
- The regulations and licensing requirements for pedicabs would be similar to those that apply to taxis and private hire vehicles (PHV), but tailored to the unique nature of the pedicab and the market they operate in.

The consultation is now open until 7th March 2025.

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GRADUATED DRIVING LICENCES

A debate on road safety for young drivers took place on 28th January 2025 following which the Government announced that it is not considering introducing graduated driver licencing (GDL) at the present time.



During the debate, Lilian Greenwood, future roads minister, acknowledged the devastating impact of young driver crashes and reiterated her commitment to engaging with bereaved families. However, she reaffirmed that the Government is “not considering GDL” - a position that has deeply saddened and frustrated campaigners.

During the debate, Ms Greenwood stated the Government is considering other measures to tackle the problem and protect young drivers.

This has been welcomed by the RAC.

Simon Williams, RAC head of policy, said:

“Despite the Future of Roads Minister firmly ruling out graduated driver licensing it’s clear the Government intends to take action to save lives. “We’re pleased to hear this and are keen to find out what measures it believes will make the biggest difference, especially given so many young drivers are involved in collisions in their first year of driving.”

The President of the Institute of Master Tutors of Driving said:

“ The current ideas which surround GDL are mainly post test is not the solution and a more effective and holistic approach to learning to drive needs to be found which is not test centred, addressing such issues as night time driving, managing passengers in cars, relationships with drink and drugs, speed management, motorway driving, driving on rural roads and distractions etc which account for most crashes. Whilst experience plays its part, the mechanics of driving is not the issue but its behavioural application for the 17 to 25 year olds in particular.”

STOLEN VEHICLES 2024

The Ford Fiesta retained its unwanted title as the most stolen car in the UK last year, with a 4,446 thefts reported in 2024. This equates to an average of 12 Fiestas stolen per day. (The Fiesta was discontinued by Ford in July 2023.)

Second was the Volkswagen Golf with 1,727 thefts. The Ford Focus followed closely in third place, with 1,700 stolen over the year.

The good news, unless you are a victim, was the overall number of vehicle thefts fell by nearly 16% in 2024. A total of 53,955 vehicles were stolen across the UK, compared to 64,087 in 2023.

The 10 most stolen cars in the UK (2024 vs. 2023)

Rank	Make	Model	Thefts in 2023	Thefts in 2024	% Change
1	Ford	Fiesta	5,976	4,446	-25.6%
2	Volkswagen	Golf	2,038	1,727	-15.3%
3	Ford	Focus	2,120	1,700	-19.8%
4	Toyota	RAV4	1,169	1,260	+7.8%
5	BMW	3 Series	1,466	1,207	-17.7%
6	Range Rover	Evoque	1,489	1,079	-27.5%
7	Nissan	Juke	636	1,027	+61.5%
8	Mercedes-Benz	C Class	1,786	1,024	-42.7%
9	Range Rover	Sport	954	950	-0.4%
10	Vauxhall	Corsa	1,110	870	-21.6%

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EXCESSIVE SPEEDS

Nearly half of UK police forces have caught motorists driving over 90mph on 30mph roads new data analysed by the RAC has shown following a Freedom of Information request to the UK's 45 police forces. It also found that almost all forces from the forty which sent in data they had clocked people driving at 60mph on these roads.

The highest recorded speed on any road was 167mph on a 70mph stretch of the M1 by Leicestershire Police.

Looking at the largest difference between the speed recorded and the posted limit, the highest logged speed was 161mph on a 50mph eastbound stretch of the A303 in Somerset.

More than half of police forces recorded drivers travelling in excess of 140mph. While most of these contraventions but not all were on 70mph motorway.

South Yorkshire Police clocked a driver at 146mph on a 50mph southbound stretch of the M1, while Police Scotland detected someone driving at 148mph on a 60mph section of the A68 in the Scottish Borders

South Yorkshire Police recorded a speed of 122mph on a 30mph road and North Wales Police logged a vehicle being driven at 88mph on a 20mph road.

“Although this data is a snapshot, it shines a light on the incredibly dangerous actions of a few, that are putting law-abiding road users at serious risk. Thankfully, the police were on hand to catch these drivers. There is no place for the vastly excessive speeds that some people are prepared to drive. While some speeds were recorded in the middle of the night when traffic will have been lighter, this isn't always the case - some of the fastest drivers were clocked at other times of day when they'd have been sharing the roads with many others.”

RAC Spokesperson

QUESTIONED BY PUPILS

Drivers caught breaking the speed limit outside Black Horse Hill Junior School in West Kirby were given the choice of taking a fixed penalty or being questioned about their driving before a special 'kids court' made up of a panel of pupils from the school in a joint initiative by Wirral Council's Road Safety Team and Merseyside Police.



During a two-hour period, 13 motorists went before the pupils' panel after being detected exceeding the speed limit by the police. In addition, one driver is being prosecuted after driving at 42mph outside the school - more than double the 20mph limit.

One of the comments received from a driver who was asked to face the panel of young people from Black Horse Hill was: “The children spoke really

well and helped me to think more about the impact of my speeding.”

Cllr Liz Grey, chair of the Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee for Wirral Council, said:

“This is a long-standing initiative between the police, our road safety team and local schools and has proven to be effective in changing driver behaviour, particularly around schools. The majority of drivers know the importance of

regulating their speed in built-up areas and around schools but for some it is only when they are faced directly with young people telling them the potential consequences of their actions that the message really lands.”



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SEAT BELT WEARING

New research reveals that many motorists are still not belting up and are contributing to the high number of road casualties and recent data from the AA Charitable Trust reveals that more than one in seven drivers (15%) regularly observe other motorists not wearing their seatbelt on motorways. Additionally, 14% have noticed passengers travelling unbelted on these high-speed roads.

A quarter of car occupants who die in crashes on Britain's roads are not wearing a seat belt - this figure rises to 41% for crashes that occur at night (6pm-8am).

The AA Trust has expressed ongoing concerns regarding seatbelt non-compliance, emphasizing that seatbelts reduce the risk of death in a crash by approximately 50%.

In their recent campaign it was noted that nearly a third (29%) of young drivers aged 17 to 29 who die in car crashes were not wearing seatbelts, with 95% of these fatalities being male.

The Department for Transport reports that seatbelt non-wearing fatalities are highest among rear seat passengers (40%).

Government statistics from 2023 further underscore the issue, indicating that around a quarter of all car occupants killed were not wearing seatbelts.

Weekends show the highest rates of non-compliance (28% on Saturdays and 30% on Sundays).

In response to these findings, The AA Trust advocates for stronger penalties for not wearing a seatbelt, increased police patrols, and enhanced public education campaigns to address this critical safety issue. PACTS have added to the debate calling for the introduction of three penalty points for those who fail to wear a seatbelt, meanwhile research from AXA UK and the charity Brake in 2024 revealed that while 96% of drivers surveyed said they always wear a seat belt, in practice, this may not always be the case.

SIZE IS BECOMING AN EVER INCREASING ISSUE

Over the last decade the size of cars has been increasing leading to concerns over parking spaces, weight issues for multi-storey car parks and even the deteriorating state of the road network.



Regulations governing parking by sizes and even multi-storey car parks are viewed as outdated and not fit for purpose as we move further into the phenomenon of 'carspreading' as it is known with supersized SUVs crowding out space in towns and cities compared to the average-sized car.

A YouGov survey commissioned by Clean Cities shows that four times as many UK car owners agree that more SUVs "will make parking more difficult" compared to those that disagree (15%). Most UK car owners (59%) also agree that SUVs are unnecessary in towns and cities, compared to just 20% who disagree. This is despite research showing that three-quarters of SUVs sold in the UK are registered to people living in towns and cities.

Supersized SUVs and they are not alone, are more than 1.8m wide (larger than typical urban on-street parking spaces) are reducing the street space for other cars and making it more dangerous for cyclists and other road users. Carspreading doesn't just affect parking, these supersized cars increase danger, congestion and pollution on our streets. City leaders must act now and stop carspreading before it's too late according to YouGov.



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HEADLIGHT GLARE IN THE NEWS AGAIN

The RAC's major new study on dazzled drivers found almost all drivers agree vehicle headlights can be too bright - more than a third (36%) believe most are, with a further 59% saying some of them are and 25% of affected motorists no longer drive at night while 22% wish they could avoid driving.

The research shows headlight glare is a complex issue that may be caused by a variety of factors. These include the alignment of a vehicle's headlights, changes in lighting technology - from halogen to bi-xenon and LED - and variations in vehicle height, as more drivers switch from conventional hatchbacks that sit lower on the road to higher-riding SUVs.



Under-35s, and those in conventional hatchbacks, estates and saloons, are more likely to say most headlights are too bright, cited by 41% and 38% of these groups.

Three in 10 drivers (29%) of higher-riding vehicles, such as SUVs, think most headlights are blinding too.

Six in 10 drivers (61%) who suffer from glare say the problem has worsened in just 12 months, with only a quarter (26%) disagreeing.

Eight in 10 (79%) dazzled drivers find it hard to tell when some vehicles are indicating.

77% say it's difficult to judge the position of oncoming vehicles on the road when their headlights are so bright. Similar proportions struggle to judge the speed of these vehicles (74%) and how far away they are (67%), suggesting dazzling headlights are having a profound impact on some motorists' confidence behind the wheel.

Official government statistics show that since 2013, there has been an average of 280 collisions a year where dazzling headlights were a contributory factor. Of these, six a year involved someone losing their life, although this only includes those collisions where a police officer attending can be sure that headlight dazzle was a factor.

A government-commissioned project on headlight glare is due to report back on findings this summer

NEW CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

After a gap of more than a year RoSPA has appointed Chris Floyd, Evri's Transport and Safety Lead, as Chair of RoSPA of the National Road Safety Committee. The post has been vacant since Graham Feest stepped down after twelve years in May 2023.



The new Vice Chair is Dr Clare Mutzenich, Research Director at Lacuna Agency. Clare leads on projects exploring how the public will interact with self-driving technologies. Again the post has been vacant since May 2023 when Martin Bailey stepped down from the role



2023 ROAD CRASHES IN EUROPE

In 2023, road crashes in the EU claimed the lives of 20,400 people. While this represents a 10% reduction compared to 2019, the decline has slowed significantly, with only a 1% decrease from 2022. This pace falls short of the 4.5% annual reduction needed to meet the EU's goal of halving road deaths by 2030.



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GUIDE FOR COUNCILORS

Elected representatives be it at Parish, District or County level all have a part to play in road safety and the latest guide published by RoSPA paints the picture about road safety and provides useful information about a councillor's responsibility.



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

HORSES

The British Horse Society (BHS) show that incidents involving horses and riders on UK roads continue to increase. In 2024, 58 horses were killed on our roads and 97 injured. Compared to 2023, this is a 12% increase in injuries.



Overall, 3,118 road incidents were recorded on the BHS's Horse i app in 2024. 81% of these occurred because a vehicle passed too closely or too quickly. Additionally, 33% of equestrians were victims of road rage or abuse, which is a 43% increase from the previous year.

The Society continues with their award winning campaign encouraging drivers to slow down and give a wide berth when meeting horses on the road.

ROAD DEATHS IN IRELAND 2024

The number of people killed on Ireland's roads in 2024 fell by 4% compared to the previous year, according to the latest data.



A total of 174 people died in 160 fatal collisions last year compared to 181 deaths in 170 collisions in 2023.

The figures were published by the Road Safety Authority (RSA) this month following analysis from provisional fatal collision reports from An Garda Síochána. They reveal a high proportion of male fatalities, a continuation of 2023's increased level of young fatalities (aged 25 years or less) and a high number of fatalities in the evening between 4pm and 8pm.

NEW ZEALAND MAKING PROGRESS

New Zealand ended 2024 with the lowest rate of road deaths per head of population in a century, provisional figures have shown.



The country recorded 289 deaths on the roads in 2024, the first time the annual road toll has been below 300 since 2014. When population size is taken into account, it equates to 5.4 road deaths per 100,000 - the lowest rate since the 1920s.

However, despite the overall good year on the roads, there were nearly 40 deaths in the month of December - the worst month of the year.

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CONTRIBUTION TO MOTORCYCLE SAFETY REWARDED

A well known and dedicated road safety practitioner working in the field of motorcycle safety has been rewarded for her efforts being presented with a Road Safety GB Achievement Award, recognising her significant contribution to furthering motorcyclist safety during her long career within the sector.



The award was presented at Road Safety GB's motorcycle conference to Karen Cole who until recently was Director of Safety at the Moptorcycle Industry Council (MCIA) where she had been for some 25 years.

While with the MCIA, she headed a project to produce a widely acclaimed DVD, 'Street, Track and Open Road', which engaged different types of riders in safety issues and better riding. The style of filming was positively received by the biker community. Another DVD, focussing on young riders in urban settings which did much to engage young people and bring them together with positive role models and attitudes to safety. She also co-authored a number of safety and policy publications, created as part of a partnership between the motorcycle industry and police.

Karen also served on the Prince Michael Awards committee and is currently a trustee of the charity Mental Health Motorbike, whose primary aim is suicide prevention, specifically supporting motorcyclists.

HEALTH AND SAFETY EXECUTIVE

The national regulator for health and safety in Great Britain is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this year coming about by the creation of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 which resulted in the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) being launched on 1st January 1975.

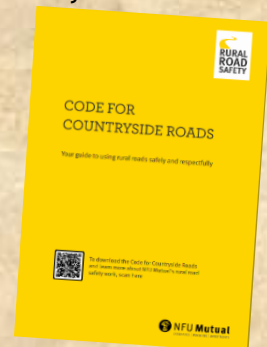
For the last 50 years it has played a central role in reducing workplace death and injury, helping Great Britain become one of the safest places in the world to work. In 1974, 651 employees were killed at work; HSE's latest annual statistics for 2023/24 show that number had reduced to 138.



CODE FOR COUNTRYSIDE ROADS

NFU Mutual says countryside roads have unique and diverse hazards which are often entirely different to those on urban roads and require a specific set of skills and awareness and so they have launched a new Code for Countryside Roads, bringing together 'expert knowledge and advice' to make rural roads safer for everyone and being supported by supported by the farming unions of all four nations, along with the British Horse Society, Older Drivers Forum, the Farm Safety Foundation, and the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA).

According to NFU Mutual's latest analysis of DfT figures, there were 70% more deaths on Britain's rural roads in 2023 than there were on urban roads. Collisions on rural roads are also around four times more likely to result in a fatality.



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

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TRANSPORT TRAFFIC SAFETY ROADS 2025



This one-day event of a conference style nature is for any person who is involved in the practice and promotion of road safety in terms of casualty reduction, reducing the risk to road users and making the environment smarter with active travel, reduction in CO2 emissions and innovation in mind.

It is for

- those working in the private, commercial, statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sectors;
- those who work as community leaders;
- those involved in education, training and enforcement.

Conducted by a series of presentations, interactive sessions and discussions we will explore interventions designed to make our transport traffic safety and road systems work in a more cohesive way.

Early bird discounts available applicable until 28th March 2025

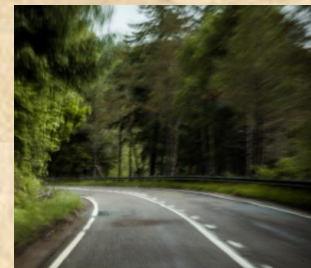
More details and link to the booking form can be found at <https://www.grahamfeest.com/gfc-events/bristol-2025/>

NOISE FOR GREATER AWARENESS

National Highways is exploring in consultation with the Road Safety Markings Association bringing in new road marking profiles to raise the audible impact of crossing centre lines which would initially be targeted at single carriageway roads, which have some of the highest risk factors on the network with cars being involved in head-on collisions due to crossing the centre line.

Dr Joanna White, research, development and innovation director at National Highways said;

'We are exploring opportunities for new road marking profiles, which could potentially provide an increased audible effect when the vehicles cross them. If viable this could provide additional benefits for use as a centreline marking on single carriageways, helping to deliver our vision that no one should be killed or seriously injured on our roads. My team have had some initial discussions with the RSMA and we look forward to continuing to explore what might be achievable.'



At the same time National Highways is also carrying out wider updates to specifications and standards in the road markings and road studs area as part of its renewal of the Manual of Contract Documents for Highway Works (MCHW).

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DISTRACTION CAMPAIGN

A new campaign launched in Scotland is urging all road users - but particularly drivers, who pose the greatest risk to others - to keep their mind on the road at all times.

According to a new survey released as part of the new distraction campaign more than 80% of road users, including drivers and pedestrians, have admitted their mind has wandered while using the road,



The survey findings reveal the potential consequences of distraction, with 16% of distracted drivers reporting a collision with another vehicle and 5% reporting a collision with a pedestrian.

More than two-in-five (42%) drivers also admitted they'd had a journey where they had zoned out and couldn't quite remember how they got to their destination.

Meanwhile, 80% of drivers surveyed admitted to some level of distraction while driving - half said their mind occasionally wandered, 29% said it happened sometimes, and 3% admitted it always did.

Similarly, the majority of pedestrians reported being affected by distractions on the road, with 79% citing various factors that influence their focus.

Of the road users who said they experienced distraction, more than a third (38%) said thinking about other activities, tasks and plans was a regular cause.

After weather, drivers cited not knowing their route well (36%), being tired (32%), being in a hurry (25%), and being worried or stressed (23%) as the things that affect them most while driving.

For pedestrians, things happening around the road (25%), their own thoughts including stress or worry (25%), being in a hurry (25%), and talking to the people they're walking with (20%) were among the most frequently cited distractions.

Mobile phones were also a major distraction, with 22% of pedestrians and 10% of drivers saying their phones affected their focus. Of those, half agreed their phone was the biggest distraction.



OLD DRIVERS

The number of older drivers is increasing and featuring more so in our collision data. Older drivers are overrepresented in collisions involving failing to look properly or misjudging other vehicles' speeds, often at intersections; however, they are less likely to be involved in crashes related to speeding or reckless driving. There are ongoing discussions about implementing mandatory eyesight tests and driver assessments for older drivers to they are fit to drive and meet the minimum requirements.



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WHY ROAD SAFETY NEEDS A CHAIN OF SURVIVAL APPROACH

I had the privilege to listen to Tim Nutbeam give the Annual Westminster Lecture at the end of last year which was organised by the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS). What follows is a synopsis as to why we need to start thinking in a different way from his point of view.

Tim is a consultant in Emergency Medicine and Prehospital Emergency Medicine based at Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust and the Devon Air Ambulance. Tim is Professor of Emergency Medicine and Post-Collision Care at the University of Plymouth. Tim has worked on extrication and post-collision research for the last decade and is the lead for the EXIT project and director at IMPACT. IMPACT the Centre for Post-Collision Research Innovation and Translation is supported by The Road Safety Trust and Vision Zero South West.



Every year, road traffic collisions claim the lives of approximately 1.3 million people worldwide, while a further 20 to 50 million suffer injuries—many of which lead to long-term disability.

Despite significant advances across many of the pillars of road safety, gaps in post-crash care remain stubbornly unaddressed.

In other areas of emergency medicine, such as cardiac arrest management, the adoption of the ‘chain of survival’ concept has led to dramatic improvements in survival rates. This structured approach ensures that patients receive the right care at the right time by strengthening each critical link in the response chain. If we want to improve outcomes for road traffic collision victims, we need to take a similar approach.

The Road Injury Chain of Survival: Much like the well-established model for cardiac arrest, a Road Injury Chain of Survival would provide a structured framework to optimise patient outcomes. This consists of five key links, all of which must function effectively to maximise survival and recovery.

Early Recognition and Calling for Help:

The first few minutes after a crash are critical. Bystanders, fellow road users, and emergency services call handlers play a vital role in recognising life-threatening injuries and ensuring an appropriate emergency response. Delays—particularly in rural or resource-limited settings—can result in significantly worse outcomes.

Encouraging rapid emergency activation, with clear guidance for bystanders on what to report and how to assist, is an essential first step.

Early Rescue: Once help is on the way, the rescue phase becomes the next priority. Being trapped in a vehicle is linked to poor outcomes, not just because of injury severity, but due to delays in assessment, treatment, and transport.

Techniques for extrication have advanced significantly, with fire and rescue services moving away from outdated assumptions—such as prolonged immobilisation or unnecessary vehicle dismantling—that may inadvertently prolong entrapment and delay critical interventions. Modernising rescue strategies, ensuring rapid access to the patient, and integrating medical decision-making into extrication efforts can all improve survival rates.

Early Initial Care: Not all road traffic collision deaths occur immediately on impact. Many are preventable with simple, timely interventions. Bystander-administered CPR is now widely recognised as a life-saving measure for cardiac arrest, but when it comes to trauma, basic first aid knowledge among the public is sorely lacking.

Teaching civilians to manage catastrophic bleeding, airway obstruction, and non-compressible haemorrhage—as has been successfully done in military and hostile environment settings—could dramatically reduce fatalities. Equipping police officers and community responders with road-injury specific first aid skills and interventions is another intervention that can save lives.

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Early Transport: Getting critically injured patients to the right hospital at the right time is key to survival. Many trauma systems have moved towards a ‘bypass’ model, where patients are taken directly to major trauma centres rather than the nearest hospital. However, transport times must be weighed against the need for urgent interventions—particularly for non-compressible haemorrhage, the leading treatable cause of trauma death.

Helicopter emergency medical services (HEMS) play a crucial role here, but only if activated early enough. Clear triage tools that help paramedics, dispatchers, and others on scene such as police officers recognise which patients will benefit from direct transport to major trauma centres or HEMS activation could improve both efficiency and outcomes.

Early Hospital Care and Rehabilitation: Survival alone is not enough. The long-term impact of road injuries on patients, families, and society is often overlooked in discussions on road safety. Early access to specialist trauma care, rehabilitation, and mental health support is essential to improving quality of life for survivors.

Countries with well-developed trauma networks have demonstrated the importance of integrating rehabilitation into acute care pathways, yet many road injury survivors face fragmented, inconsistent, or inadequate follow-up. Without structured rehabilitation, survivors can face lifelong disability, chronic pain, and reduced social or economic participation.

Why This Framework Matters



The Road Injury Chain of Survival is more than just a theoretical model—it provides a roadmap for governments, emergency services, and road safety advocates to focus on the most impactful interventions. By identifying key weaknesses in each link, policymakers and healthcare leaders can target investment where it will make the greatest difference. For example, strengthening public first aid knowledge through Stop the Bleed-style campaigns could help reduce preventable trauma deaths. Training emergency dispatchers to better triage road traffic collision calls could ensure resources are deployed more effectively. And ensuring that fire and rescue services adopt modern, medically informed extrication strategies could significantly reduce entrapment times.

While prevention is undeniably crucial, we must also acknowledge that some collisions will always occur, and our responsibility is to ensure that those involved have the best possible chance of survival and recovery.

By embedding the Road Injury Chain of Survival into trauma care policies and emergency response frameworks, we can close the gaps that currently cost lives. This requires investment in research, training, and inter-agency collaboration. We call on policymakers, road safety professionals, and trauma care providers to adopt and refine this approach. By doing so, we can ensure that every person who experiences a road traffic collision has the best possible chance of not only surviving—but living well after their injury.

If we take this challenge seriously, the Road Injury Chain of Survival could be the next game-changer in saving lives on our roads.