

**Good Neighbours
Community
Transport**



Managing Road Risk Policy

8th February 2012

**Registered Charity No: 1129855
Company Ltd by Guarantee Reg. No 6749402**

Voluntary organisations have a duty of care under health and safety law to ensure the safety of their staff, volunteers, passengers and anyone else (i.e. other road users) who may be affected by their activities.

Fitness to Drive

- ❖ It is generally accepted that drivers who are tired are responsible for more deaths on the road than ones who are drunk.
- ❖ Drivers who have had a bad nights sleep or are tired for any reason should contact the office as soon as possible and cancel any journeys booked until they feel fit to drive.
- ❖ Do not drive when affected by illness. Over the counter cold remedies for instance can cause drowsiness. Check the label or patient information leaflet. If the label says that certain side-effects may occur, assume that they will do so.
- ❖ Do not drive when affected by medication. Check the patient information leaflet or with the pharmacist when prescribed new medicines. Some drugs may make you drowsy and recommend that you avoid driving until you know if you will be affected in this manner.
- ❖ Avoid drinking alcohol in the hours before you will be driving (for example at lunchtime). It can take several hours for alcohol to be removed from your body, and you may still be over the limit, or affected by alcohol the morning after you have been drinking. Alcohol impairs judgement, making drivers more likely to take risks. It slows their reactions, increases stopping distances, impairs judgement of speed and distance and affects vision. Even a small amount, well below the legal limit, seriously affects the ability to drive safely.
- ❖ Do not drive if you have taken illegal drugs. They can affect your decision making and driving skills, as well as your physical and mental condition and behaviour.

Safe Driving

As a driver you are personally responsible for complying with all road traffic legislation. Re-read the Highway Code regularly. It is often updated and make sure it is a current edition, or go to www.highwaycode.gov.uk

Mobile phones

It is illegal to use a hand held mobile phone while driving. This includes any activity that includes holding the phone such as dialling a number or writing a text message. It can also be illegal to use a hands free phone while driving. Depending upon the circumstances, drivers could be charged with 'failing to have proper control of their vehicle', or careless or dangerous driving if they are distracted because they are using a hands-free phone.

Good Neighbours Community Transport has a policy of no use of any type of mobile phones whilst driving.

SatNavs

Increasing numbers of vehicles are being fitted with Satellite Navigation Systems. While these are very useful they can be distracting. Drivers should not adjust or operate these devices while driving. If it is necessary to make adjustments, or input new information, only do so when stopped in a safe place.

Seat Belts

Drivers and all passengers must wear seat belts. If a passenger refuses to wear a seat belt then the journey must not go ahead.

Safe Vehicle

As a volunteer driver you are responsible for ensuring that the vehicle you are driving is safe and legal.

It is essential that Good Neighbours Community Transport has copies of M.O.T certificates (where applicable) each time that your car has an M.O.T and insurance certificate each time your insurance is renewed.

Before driving the vehicle check:

- ❖ Tyres are undamaged (no cuts or bulges), are at the correct pressure for the number of passengers being carried and have enough tread grip. The legal minimum is 1.6mm, but above 3mm gives a much shorter braking distance in wet conditions.
- ❖ There are no signs of vehicle damage
- ❖ Oil, coolant and windscreen wash levels are correct (check when cold) and washers and wipers are working
- ❖ Brakes
- ❖ Lights and indicators are working
- ❖ Mirrors are correctly positioned
- ❖ Occupants are using their seat belts
- ❖ Loads are securely restrained
- ❖ Driving position is comfortable

Speed

Excessive speed contributes to 26% of collisions in which someone is killed, 18% of crashes resulting in serious injury and 12% of all injury collisions. This means that around 900 people are killed each year on Britain's roads because drivers and riders travel too fast, and over 6,000 are seriously injured.

Drivers who are travelling at higher speeds have less time to identify and react to what is happening around them. It takes them longer to stop, and if there is a crash it is more severe, causing greater injury to the occupants and any pedestrian or rider they may hit.

Higher speed also magnifies other driver errors, such as close-following or driving when tired or distracted, thus multiplying the chances of causing a crash.

- ❖ Speed limits set the maximum speed for that road. There are many circumstances when it is not safe to drive at that speed (i.e. around schools at opening and closing times, on busy, narrow roads, on rural roads which are bendy and hilly visibility is restricted).
- ❖ Always stay within the speed limits (including variable limits and temporary limits at road works) even if you think that the limit is too slow.
- ❖ Always allow plenty of time for a journey. Allow extra time when adverse weather conditions.
- ❖ Make sure that you know the speed limits of the roads you are using.

Maximum Speed Limits

Type of Vehicle	Built-up areas	Single carriageway	Dual carriageway	Motorways
Cars				
Cars towing caravans/ trailers				
Buses & Coaches (less than 12 meters long)				
Goods Vehicles (less than 7.5 tonnes maximum laden weight)				
HGV's (more than 7.5 tonnes maximum laden weight)				

Driving in adverse weather conditions

You **MUST** use headlights when visibility is seriously reduced, generally when you cannot see for more than 100 metres (328 feet). You may also use front or rear fog lights but you **MUST** switch them off when visibility improves.

Wet weather.

In wet weather, stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry roads. This is because your tyres have less grip on the road. In wet weather

- ❖ You should keep well back from the vehicle in front. This will increase your ability to see and plan ahead
- ❖ If the steering becomes unresponsive, it probably means that water is preventing the tyres from gripping the road. Ease off the accelerator and slow down gradually
- ❖ The rain and spray from vehicles may make it difficult to see and be seen
- ❖ Be aware of the dangers of spilt diesel that will make the surface very slippery
- ❖ Take extra care around pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists and horse riders

Icy and snowy weather.

In winter check the local weather forecast for warnings of icy or snowy weather. Take great care and allow more time for your journey. Take an emergency kit of de-icer and ice scraper, torch, warm clothing and boots, first aid kit, jump leads and a shovel, together with a warm drink and emergency food in case you get stuck or your vehicle breaks down.

Before you set off

- ❖ You **MUST** be able to see, so clear all snow and ice from all your windows
- ❖ You **MUST** ensure that lights are clean and number plates are clearly visible and legible
- ❖ Make sure the mirrors are clear and the windows are demisted thoroughly
- ❖ Remove all snow that might fall off into the path of other road users
- ❖ Check your planned route is clear of delays and that no further snowfalls or severe weather are predicted

When driving in icy or snowy weather

- ❖ Drive with care, even if the roads have been treated
- ❖ Keep well back from the road user in front as stopping distances can be ten times greater than on dry roads
- ❖ Take care when overtaking vehicles spreading salt or other de-icer
- ❖ Watch out for snowploughs which may throw out snow on either side. Do not overtake them unless the lane you intend to use has been cleared
- ❖ Be prepared for the road conditions to change over relatively short distances
- ❖ Listen to travel bulletins and take note of variable message signs that may provide information about weather, road and traffic conditions ahead

Drive extremely carefully when the roads are icy. Avoid sudden actions as these could cause loss of control. You should

- ❖ Drive at a slow speed in as high a gear as possible; accelerate and brake very gently
- ❖ Drive particularly slowly on bends where loss of control is more likely. Brake progressively on the straight before you reach a bend. Having slowed down, steer smoothly round the bend, avoiding sudden actions

Check your grip on the road surface when there is snow or ice by choosing a safe place to brake gently. If the steering feels unresponsive this may indicate ice and your vehicle losing its grip on the road. When travelling on ice, tyres make virtually no noise

Windy weather

High-sided vehicles are most affected by windy weather, but strong gusts can also blow a car, cyclist, motorcyclist or horse rider off course. This can happen on open stretches of road exposed to strong crosswinds, or when passing bridges or gaps in hedges.

In very windy weather your vehicle may be affected by turbulence created by large vehicles. Motorcyclists are particularly affected, so keep well back from them when they are overtaking a high-sided vehicle.

Fog

Before entering fog check your mirrors then slow down. If the word 'Fog' is shown on a roadside signal but the road is clear, be prepared for a bank of fog or drifting patchy fog ahead. Even if it seems to be clearing, you can suddenly find yourself in thick fog.

When driving in fog you should

- ❖ use your lights as required
- ❖ keep a safe distance behind the vehicle in front. Rear lights can give a false sense of security
- ❖ be able to pull up well within the distance you can see clearly. This is particularly important on motorways and dual carriageways, as vehicles are travelling faster
- ❖ use your windscreen wipers and demisters

- ❖ beware of other drivers not using headlights
- ❖ not accelerate to get away from a vehicle which is too close behind you
- ❖ check your mirrors before you slow down. Then use your brakes so that your brake lights warn drivers behind you that you are slowing down
- ❖ stop in the correct position at a junction with limited visibility and listen for traffic. When you are sure it is safe to emerge, do so positively and do not hesitate in a position that puts you directly in the path of approaching vehicles

You **MUST NOT** use front or rear fog lights unless visibility is seriously reduced as they dazzle other road users and can obscure your brake lights. You **MUST** switch them off when visibility improves.

Hot weather. Keep your vehicle well ventilated to avoid drowsiness. Be aware that the road surface may become soft or if it rains after a dry spell it may become slippery. These conditions could affect your steering and braking. If you are dazzled by bright sunlight, slow down and if necessary, stop.