

Embargoed until 00:01 28 April

Motorist's Urged to Check Their Vision Is Roadworthy

Optical bodies have united to work alongside motoring organisations[\[1\]](#) to launch 'Is Your Vision Roadworthy?' – a public information campaign which aims to educate motorists about their legal obligation to ensure their eyesight is fit to drive.

Ahead of the official campaign launch on Friday 28 April, police forces throughout England, Scotland and Wales conducted roadside vision screening wherever possible, when stopping a vehicle.

Twenty-three out of 45 police forces submitted data for 898 motorists. This information was then collated and analysed by Dr Carol Hawley, University of Warwick and CARGY Research – 2.2% of number plate tests resulted in failure.

Extrapolating this data across the active driving licence holders in the UK this suggests more than 900,000 British drivers would fail to meet even the most basic eyesight standard for driving[\[2\]](#).

And, it's men who appear to have the biggest blind spot when it comes to vision and driving making up three quarters of those who failed the number plate test. Advancing years also increased a driver's risk of falling short of the legal eyesight standards – the average age of those unable to read a number plate from 20 metres was 69.3 years. The youngest driver to fail was 30 and the oldest 90 years of age.

Eighty-five per cent of drivers who failed the 'Is Your Vision Roadworthy?' roadside vision screening had their licence revoked on-the-spot under legislation known as Cassie's Law[\[3\]](#).

The campaign launch is set to co-incide with the Early May Bank Holiday (28 April – 1 May) when traffic volumes are set to peak[\[4\]](#). The charity Eye Health UK estimates that over the Bank Holiday period over half a million car journeys will be made by drivers whose vision falls below the legal limit, due to an undiagnosed or untreated vision condition or simply because a driver isn't wearing the eye wear they have been prescribed for driving[\[5\]](#) – a third of those who failed the number plate test and had been prescribed corrective lenses were not wearing them at the time they were stopped for the roadside test.

Chief Constable Jo Shiner, the National Police Chief Council's lead for Roads Policing

comments: "Personal responsibility is the starting point for safer roads. Making sure your eyesight meets the standards of vision for driving is really important and something only you can do to keep yourself and all other road users safe while driving."

The campaign, which has been made possible thanks to a grant from Central Optical Fund, will see motorists encouraged to have routine eye tests to keep their vision roadworthy and prevent it becoming a road safety hazard.

A state-of-the-art driving simulator at Brunel University gives an insight into what can happen when people drive with poor eyesight. When a driver's vision was blurred, they struggled to stay in lane, keep a consistent speed, or read road signs. Even when sight was simply reduced to the legal minimum level, people strayed out of lane 62% more often than with normal vision. They also couldn't recognise a quarter (23%) of the road signs they passed[\[6\]](#). Impaired vision also prevents motorists from reacting to hazards and causes fatigue.

Around 3,000 people are killed or injured by a driver with failing eyesight every year in the UK[7].

Emma Damen, daughter of Jim Tassell who was tragically killed when a driver knocked him off his bike while he cycled along a country lane near Andover, Hampshire in 2022 says: “My Dad was killed by a driver who could not see more than 2 metres ahead, the legal requirement is 20 metres. This driver knew his eyesight was defective yet still chose to drive resulting in indescribable devastation to me and my family. I urge anyone who has concerns regarding their own eyesight or another driver, please get an eyesight test to confirm you are safe to drive.”

Forty-two per cent of drivers undertaking the roadside vision screening admitted they had not had an eye test in the last two years, as recommended.

Throughout the public information campaign – which includes, a national roadside poster campaign, media relations activity, a podcast, social media promotion and launch of a dedicated website [VisionAndDriving.info](https://www.visionanddriving.info) – motorists will be reminded about the importance of ensuring their vision is roadworthy, how to keep their eyes fit for the road and what the eyesight standards for driving are. They will also hear practical tips for maximising visual comfort when behind the wheel and advice on retiring from the road.

Practices can get involved and support the campaign using promotional materials cascaded down from the optical bodies.

Follow the campaign on socials by searching for the hashtags:

#IsYourVisionRoadworthy

#ThinkEyesEveryTimeYouDrive

#RoadSafetyCheck

-ends-

For further press information contact:

Rachel Robson, tel: 07986 056380 email: rachel@visionmatters.org.uk

Notes to Editors

Enc: Image of Is Your Vision Roadworthy? Roadside Poster campaign and campaign artwork.

Case studies available on request.