

NEWS RELEASE

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New campaign aims to help older people to drive safely for longer

A new campaign and resources are being launched helping Norfolk's residents to understand how aging might impact safe driving.

Norfolk County Council's Road Safety Team, in collaboration with Norfolk Police, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) and East of England Ambulance Service, are supporting people to review their driving and get the support they need when they need it. The campaign encourages peoples to look out for subtle health changes, to talk honestly with trusted friends, family or a professional about how health could impact your driving. and take extra steps to ensure you can drive safely for longer.

More information about this campaign and safe driving can be found at www.norfolk.gov.uk/drivesafe.

Older people driving across Norfolk have a wealth of experience and are likely to adjust their behaviours and commit to safe driving. 25% of Norfolk's population are over 65, this is a growing demographic, and with Norfolk also having a higher healthy life expectancy than the national average this is an important issue for Norfolk.

However, 81% of people who responded to Norfolk County Council's Older Driver Survey in 2024 reported not knowing where to get support to drive safely for longer.

Since 2022 police recorded collisions indicate an increase in casualties aged 60 plus years meaning that this is now greater than the England average.

Cllr Fran Whymark, Cabinet Member for Public Health said "For many of us, driving is a part of daily life, and the idea that we might need support, or some advice, to drive safely is difficult to swallow. But it's natural that as we get older our reactions slow down, our eyesight isn't as good, or any number of other things can happen that affect our driving skills.

"I completed a GOLD course earlier this week and it was a great chance to assess my driving skills and get some advice from the brilliant instructor, Andy."

A GOLD course is designed to refresh driving skills, build confidence, and support older drivers in staying safe on the road for longer. This one-hour on-road driving session is conducted by an approved driving instructor (ADI) who tailors the session to the driver's needs.

The campaign, called 'Drive Safe' includes a series of videos produced by NFRS, a digital toolkit with practical tips, new driver workshops and additional places on NCC's GOLD course. 2000 have already accessed the new resources since NCC's new older driver webpage was officially launched in April 2025, and 70 people have registered to attend a driver workshop.

This campaign builds on the Road Safety Team's commitment to offer a life-long learning approach to driving, starting with a successful 'Stay Focussed' driver campaign from 2024, and a recent online event for young and new learner drivers attended by hundreds of young people and their parents across the county.

Additional quotes

Emyr Gough, Head of Prevention and Protection at Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, said: "We want all road users to stay safe and well, having regular health checks and paying attention to how they are feeling about driving in general or driving in certain conditions.

"We would always advise people to use the safest mode of transport for them, knowing that we all contribute to the safety of Norfolk's roads."

Insp Will Drummond, from the Roads and Armed Policing Team added: "We all have a responsibility to keep ourselves and other road users safe. This can mean maintaining the condition of your vehicle or not using your mobile phone behind the wheel but as we get older, this can also mean assessing your driving capability."

"It is important that we routinely review our eyesight and health changes which may affect our driving. This can enable us to stay safer for longer."

Professor Michael Hornberger, Professor of Applied Dementia Research at UEA, said "Driving is a very important part of our independence when we age, in particular when we live in a rural location. Unfortunately, ageing changes can affect our driving safety, even if we have been excellent drivers for many decades. It is, therefore, very important for us to get our eyesight, mobility and cognition checked, so that we can remain safe drivers and keep our independence."