

## **‘Cyclist Aware’ April 2026**

This document summarises content from the ODFG webinar focused on cyclist awareness in Gloucestershire. It reflects the key evidence, insights and practical advice shared during the session, designed to support mature drivers in sharing the road safely with cyclists.

### **1. Introduction**

Cyclists are one of the most vulnerable road user groups. Although they make up a small proportion of traffic, they are significantly over-represented in road casualties. Understanding their risks and behaviours is essential to improving safety for everyone who shares the road.

### **2. Cyclist Vulnerability – The Evidence**

- Cyclists represent around 1% of traffic but account for approximately 14% of killed and seriously injured casualties and 6% of road deaths.
- In Gloucestershire, nearly 14% of all serious road casualties involve cyclists.
- Around 50% of casualties involve riders aged 41–69, with the majority being male.
- Nearly 70% of incidents occur in urban areas, particularly Gloucester and Cheltenham.
- Most collisions take place on 30mph roads and during weekday afternoon rush hours.

This shows that cyclist collisions are not rare or unusual events—they occur in everyday driving situations.

### **3. Common Collision Scenarios**

- 96% of cyclist collisions involve another vehicle
- Around 70% occur at junctions, roundabouts or during turning manoeuvres
- Approximately 25% occur during overtaking

These scenarios highlight that interaction between drivers and cyclists is the key risk factor.

### **4. Why Cyclists Can Be Difficult to See**

- Cyclists have a smaller visual profile than cars
- The brain may not register them if we are not expecting them (‘look but do not see’)
- Urban environments create visual clutter and distractions
- Cyclists may be hidden by parked cars or positioned differently in the road

These factors mean drivers need to actively look for cyclists rather than assume they will be obvious.

## 5. Hazard Perception and Mature Drivers

Hazard perception is the ability to identify, predict and respond to risks early.

With age, this can be affected by:

- Slower processing speeds
- Reduced peripheral vision
- Increased cognitive load in complex environments

However, mature drivers also bring strengths:

- Greater experience
- Better anticipation
- More cautious decision-making

Improving hazard perception involves actively expecting cyclists, scanning more widely, and allowing more time for decisions.

## 6. Practical Driving Advice

- Expect cyclists, particularly in urban areas
- Take a second look at junctions and roundabouts
- Reduce speed in complex environments
- Check mirrors and blind spots carefully
- Allow at least 1.5 metres when overtaking
- Avoid overtaking a cyclist before turning left
- Give cyclists time and space to move safely

Small adjustments in behaviour can significantly reduce risk.

## 7. Highway Code Guidance

The Highway Code emphasises a hierarchy of road users, placing greater responsibility on those who can cause more harm.

Key guidance includes:

- Giving priority to cyclists in certain junction scenarios
- Allowing sufficient space when overtaking
- Being aware that cyclists may take the centre of the lane for safety
- Using the 'Dutch Reach' when opening car doors to check for passing cyclists

Keeping up to date with the Highway Code is essential for safe driving.

## 8. Vehicle Preparedness and Technology

Drivers should ensure their vehicle supports safe observation:

- Maintain clear windscreens and mirrors
- Remove obstructions such as poorly placed sat navs or stickers
- Consider aids such as panoramic mirrors or blind spot mirrors

Modern vehicles may include Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS):

- Blind spot monitoring
- Collision warning systems
- Rear cross traffic alerts

These systems can support awareness but should never replace active observation.

### **9. Journey Planning**

Planning journeys can reduce risk:

- Use tools such as Crashmap to identify collision hotspots
- Be particularly vigilant in urban areas
- Avoid peak commuting times where possible
- Allow extra time to reduce pressure and rushed decisions

Driving confidently often comes from good preparation.

### **10. Safe System Approach**

Government's new Road Safety Strategy adopts a Safe System approach, recognising that mistakes happen and the system should prevent them resulting in serious harm.

This includes:

- Safer roads (infrastructure improvements)
- Safer road users (education and awareness)
- Safer speeds
- Safer vehicles

The work of the Older Drivers Forum supports this by focusing on behaviour, awareness and early intervention.

### **11. Key Takeaway**

Most collisions involving cyclists occur in everyday situations and often result from simple factors:

- Not seeing a cyclist early enough
- Not expecting them to be present
- Not allowing enough time or space

By making small, conscious adjustments in how we observe, anticipate and interact with cyclists, drivers can significantly improve safety and maintain confidence in their driving.

## 12. Useful Contacts

- Older Drivers Forum Gloucestershire events and social media  
[www.olderdriversforum.com/gloucestershire](http://www.olderdriversforum.com/gloucestershire) [www.facebook.com/olderdriversforum/](http://www.facebook.com/olderdriversforum/)  
<https://x.com/odfglos>
- 'Needs Assessment' report of road safety in Gloucestershire  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/inform/inform-news/road-safety-needs-assessment/>
- Crashmap [www.crashmap.co.uk](http://www.crashmap.co.uk)
- Look but do not see video [www.youtube.com/watch?v=x94PGgYKHQ0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x94PGgYKHQ0)
- Highway Code [www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-safety](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-safety)  
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code>  
<https://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-road-safety>  
Hardcopy: <https://www.tsoshop.co.uk/product/9780115539954/Transport/Driver-And-Vehicle-Standards-Agency/The-official-highway-code>  
<https://www.amazon.co.uk/official-highway-Driver-Vehicle-Standards/dp/0115539956>
- Hazard Perception Tests: <https://www.safedrivingforlife.info/free-practice-tests/hazard-perception-test/> <https://www.gov.uk/theory-test/hazard-perception-test>
- Driving ability and knowledge: <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/roadsafety/mature-drivers/> <https://www.iamroadsmart.com/> <https://www.drivingmobility.org.uk/>  
<https://georgescarmedia.com/> <https://www.drivingforbetterbusiness.com/>
- Government new Road Safety Strategy:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/road-safety-strategy>  
<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/9563/road-safety-strategy/>  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crime-and-policing-bill-2025-factsheets/crime-and-policing-bill-dangerous-cycling-offences-factsheet>
- Bikeability in Gloucestershire:  
<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/thinktravel/cycling/bikeability-training/>

We are a voluntary organisation operating under the charitable status of the Gloucestershire Older Persons Association (charity number: 1124977)  
This charity is registered for gift aid.

**To donate to support our work please go to our Just Giving campaign page  
'Drive-Safer-Longer.'** <https://tinyurl.com/fr9wktvf>