

Student drivers urged to lighten up before taking to the road as Freshers' season starts

Students are reminded to make sure they have loaded their vehicle correctly and carried out basic vehicle checks before setting off to college or university this Freshers' season.

Freshers' week is a rite of passage for many new students, providing an opportunity to make friends and let the hair down before lectures start.

Highways England is urging those travelling away to study for the first time to make sure they don't overload their vehicle and to avoid getting behind the wheel while tired.

New research by the organisation responsible for running England's major A-road and motorway network shows 6 out of 10 students would carry on driving, even if they may have overloaded their car. The data also shows that 7 out of 10 students have driven while tired.

The information comes after Highways England surveyed more than 1,400 students ahead of Freshers season starting.

With many young people likely to be moving away from home to university accommodation, Highways England is calling on students to 'check it before driving it' and says people should avoid packing everything but the proverbial 'kitchen sink'.

Richard Leonard, head of road safety at Highways England, said:

We want everyone to get to their destination safely and we can all play a part in that. We know that this is an incredibly exciting time for students with many leaving home for the first time.

Our traffic officers are there to help get things moving if there's a problem. But we'd urge all students to make sure they load their car correctly before setting off as they could be endangering themselves and other road users.

Advice for loading vehicles correctly includes:

- place heavy luggage on the boot floor, directly behind the rear seat backrest so that it can't move or fall over in to the free space
- put light luggage on top of the large cases and cover it with a blanket and secure it all with a strap otherwise loose objects can turn into dangerous projectiles, especially if the luggage exceeds the height of the rear seat

- heavy luggage can be safely stored in the space between the front and rear seats
- store small and light objects that you do not necessarily need while driving behind the front seat or in vacuum bags which fit neatly into the storage space under the seats
- put anything particularly heavy in the boot and not unrestrained on the back seat and secure the load if carrying anything externally on the car eg a roof box or bike
- drivers should still be able to see in their mirrors when driving
- if people aren't sure about the car's official weight limit they should check their handbook. If they feel they are close to the limit they can go to a weighbridge to check
- drivers should make sure they have the right insurance, especially if using other people's vehicles and are sharing the driving or towing a trailer

Highways England traffic officer Kelly Rudge is keen all students take time to make sure their vehicles are loaded properly and are ready to take to the road. Kelly said:

It's really important that students check their vehicle before setting off and to make sure that they don't overload them as it could cause serious danger to themselves and other motorists.

Simple things like putting heavy loads in the boot and keeping loose items inside the car secured can all help to keep the occupants safe if the vehicle comes to a sudden stop. The last thing anyone wants is to be hit by an object that isn't secure.

Birmingham City University student Shelby Thomas, aged 20, often drives to university in the city. The third-year Criminology and Security Studies student is backing Highways England's calls to make sure students carry out vehicle checks. She said:

It's really important that students check their car over before setting off and if they're unsure of something then get a parent or experienced person to check the car. It's important that it's fit to drive.

I do worry about overloading the car but after speaking with Highways England traffic officer Kelly Rudge, I'm much more aware of how to do it safely and the dangers of not getting it right. Now, if I need to transport lots of items, I'll check the handbook to make sure the weight is okay, or I'll get someone experienced to tell me if I have put too much in the car. If I need to do more than one journey, I'd rather do that than cram it all into the car and risk causing a problem.

And with data showing that 7 in 10 students have admitted to driving while

tired, Shelby is also urging her fellow students to think twice before getting behind the wheel if they're all partied out from the night before. She added:

If anyone is tired, just get someone else to drive. It's much easier to get a friend to take you where you need to go rather than risking your own life and others by getting behind the wheel while tired.

Highways England traffic officer Kelly Rudge checks engine oil with student Shelby Thomas.

Highways England also recently launched a safety campaign encouraging drivers to remember the basics of motorway driving, including what to do if you break down.

Adverts on radio, billboards and online reminded drivers of simple driving rules to help keep everyone moving.

Around a quarter of breakdowns are caused by punctures or other tyre issues. Vehicles running out of fuel and engines overheating are also other common reasons for breakdowns on motorways.

More advice:

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

[Businesses reminded to register on system to maintain environmental standards on harmful gases post-Brexit](#)

On World Ozone Day, the government is reminding businesses to register on an [online system](#) to ensure the UK maintains current restrictions on the use of fluorinated greenhouse gases after we leave the EU.

The online system controls the use of these harmful greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.

This includes Fluorinated gases (F gases), powerful greenhouse gases used in refrigerators and air conditioners, as well as [Ozone Depleting Substances \(ODS\)](#), which damage the Earth's ozone layer.

If the UK leaves the EU without a deal, UK businesses that produce or trade in these gases or products that contain them will have to register on the new system by 14 November. This will replace the current system which controls emissions for all EU Member States.

The new system will enable the UK to continue its commitment to phase down the use of F gas by 79% between 2015 and 2030 to combat climate change.

This is just one part of the UK's ambitious work to lead the world in tackling climate change, committing to a target of net-zero greenhouse emissions by 2050 and securing the international backing to host the COP26 UN climate change summit, in partnership with Italy, in Glasgow next year.

Environment Minister Rebecca Pow said:

World Ozone Day is an important reminder of the need to do everything we can to protect our fragile ozone layer, which is one of the many reasons that this government is making sure that our environmental standards will be not only maintained but enhanced after we leave the EU.

This online system is part of that commitment, and while we would prefer to leave the EU with a deal, it's crucial that businesses sign up ahead of 31 October if we cannot reach an agreement.

This is not only so they can continue to import F gas, but also so that the UK can continue to phase down its use as part of the global fight against climate change.

Under the new requirements:

- Businesses that produce or import F gas or ODSs in the UK must register to the new UK system. Businesses are able to register now until 14 November 2019. UK businesses which are already registered on the EU system will receive a reminder email from Defra about how to register. Other businesses can also [register online](#);
- Businesses should register before 31 October so that they can continue their operation as normal from 1 November;
- Businesses looking to secure an F Gas quota for the first time would need to wait until after 14 November 2019 before they can use their quota to import gas. Anyone registering after 14 November 2019 would not get a quota for 2019 or 2020;
- UK businesses that import products containing F gas or ODSs must be authorised under the new UK system;

- UK businesses that export F gas or ODSs, or products containing them, to the EU would need to set up an office in the EU or appoint an Only Representative to meet EU regulations; and
- Businesses and members of the public that use products that contain F gas or ODSs should continue to operate as they do now as regulations and supply will remain the same.

Technicians qualified in the UK to service products that use F gas or ODSs, such as refrigerators and air conditioners, will continue to be authorised to operate in the UK but not in the EU.

UK certified technicians who work in the EU should monitor decisions made by the EU Commission and Member State governments.

Businesses and technicians that may be affected should read the [latest guidance on using and trading in F gas and ODSs](#) after the UK leaves the EU.

RESI Convention 2019

Well hello and it really is a pleasure to be here in the busiest week in politics, well that is since the last week in politics!

And it's wonderful to be here in Newport. Though I have to say I did ask as it's my very first speech as Housing Minister and it's a devolved matter, why am I in Wales?

And then when I got here and saw how magnificent the place was, I could see why you keep coming back here so I am delighted to be here with you today.

And, I am also the first female Housing Minister in a decade.

Now you don't come into politics as a woman to do 'housework', but when the Prime Minister asks you to do so on behalf of your country you make an exception!

And maybe, just maybe Boris thought the ask was so big, building 300,000 homes each year by the mid-2020s, only a woman could get that much 'housework' done!

Whilst I might be the first woman in a decade to do this job, you all know there has been 9 housing ministers in 9 years, so I want to say, that although we have been many in number, our collective commitment to deliver the homes this country needs has been constant and unwavering.

That working with yourselves, working with the industry, we have together delivered some significant achievements.

- We published the new National Planning Policy Framework scheme ironing

out the planning process to help us deliver the houses we need. Our work on planning reform continues, as we focus on delivering an Accelerated Planning Green Paper.

- We've invested £9 billion in the Affordable Homes Programme and committed a further £2 billion in long-term partnerships that gives Housing Associations the certainty through funding up to 2029, nearly 10 years from now.
- And we have all focused on ensuring that our flagship Help to Buy programme has driven the supply in new homes and vitally, have helped a new generation of people onto the property ladder.

Progress together has been significant since 2010,

1.3 million more homes have been delivered.

430,000 affordable homes.

With 222,000 additional homes built in the last year alone.

Government is backing the industry with real investment and with interventions. And that is to make the dream of home ownership a reality. A dream that the vast majority of the public still have and continue to have.

And why is that? It's about having a stake in society, it's about having security, it is about aspiration, it is actually about freedom. It's about financial security, and it's about safety for you and your family and it provides people with a real stake in their community.

And whether you own your home or not, we all need a roof over our head.

I can say that because I've had many homes in my life, many experiences in my life.

I've been in a Barnardo's home, I've been in my grandparents' home, I've been in a council home, my first family owned home and now my own home.

Every single one holds an exceptional and significant experience for me.

So, providing these homes are essential; to provide homes for all people, from all walks of life, for the need they have at that moment in time.

In fact, it is a scandal, possibly the greatest scandal over the last 30 years that we've had a shortage in houses. And that has led, as we know, to a rise in renting and costs, and to a fall in home ownership which has destroyed the aspiration of a generation of working people.

We need to put that right.

And this government, with your help will put that right.

Since the mid-1990s, house prices have risen to 8 times, 10 times, 12 times, in some of the most expensive parts of this country 44 times the actual income of someone, that cannot be right.

Successive Conservative governments have sought to put a lid on that escalation, helping working people get on the housing ladder so they don't have to dip into the bank of mum and dad.

It still isn't enough, but we have cut stamp duty for 95% of first-time buyers and abolished it altogether for 80% of them.

We've introduced Help to Buy, loan and ISA, helping more than half a million have the security of home ownership.

And we've continued the hugely successful Right to Buy which has helped generations after generations onto the housing ladder.

But there is a limit to what government can do, for example, Help to Buy is precisely that. It is helping people to buy, it is not helping somebody to make a profit, it is not helping to increase the prices of property. It is about helping people to buy.

So this government will be vigilant about what is working, keeping an eye on our goal. That is a shared goal, helping people into a home and into home ownership.

Extending ownership schemes and building the homes the country needs.

And, we're doing that straight away, we've looked at ownership models, so making Shared Ownership more accessible for working families. We've started that already so buyers can have a staircase of 1% increases rather than 10% leaps.

We're going to look to expand Shared Ownership, supporting it in different ways, taking out what we hear to be the difficulties of it, the expense of it. It shouldn't be unfair for those trying to get onto the housing market.

And Rent to Buy, so people can rent knowing that they are going to buy, knowing that they've got a bit of breathing space, maybe it's in 5 years, maybe it's in 10 years, but they will get to own that property – so they can plan, knowing they have the certainty of getting a deposit and getting that house.

And Right to Build, so many places around the world have far more people building their own homes, so we're going to be there, whether its support for Right to Buy or Right to Build.

And also supporting communities, for Communities to Build.

Because there are so many houses to build – we need to open up all of those opportunities.

Too many people feel that vital link between hard-work and owning their own home is broken. And when that link is severed, social mobility and opportunity falls away.

For so many people in our public sector, like our nurses and our teachers,

like our police, owning their own home feels like the dream that has been taken away from them.

This is not right, they are the backbone of our country. They deserve a home of their own and they are looking to us to see what we can do. They are looking to us to fix it like we look to them to teach our kids like we look to them when we need healthcare, to look after us. They're looking to us now to return that favour and look after them.

So, that's 300,000 more homes a year to build. Each and every year.

Now we're getting closer to that target – we're building more, more than before. In fact last year we built more homes than in every year bar one in the last 31 years.

In Greater Manchester, the number of extra homes built is rising by more than 12%.

In Birmingham, it's rising by 80%.

Only in London, [political content removed], have the number of new homes fallen.

While the trend is heading upwards, I've found there's still serious barriers stopping that progress unnecessarily, and we need to understand what those barriers are, understand what is getting in our way so we can remove them.

We also need to focus on Brownfield sites – what are we doing there? Are we doing enough there? Are we building enough homes there? Regeneration must be something we should be most proud of, turning round, I call it, unloved land.

And I know regeneration is a tough thing to do, I know that, that's what my family's business is in – demolition, excavation, regeneration, so we know that, and that is why government has put in billions of pounds in support to help with regeneration on Brownfield sites and that is what we must do.

Because greenfield land, greenfield sites, should not be what we turn to, not what we look at first.

Every blade of grass must be looked at before it is changed – and it is only in the most exceptional circumstances we turn there and I can announce today councils will receive a share of nearly £2 million to crackdown on illegal development, including in the green belt.

I'll be putting money there, to help with enforcement officers, new technology and legal costs.

And alongside that, there will be a cash boost, from our department too, we are teaming up with the Royal Town Planning Institute to overhaul the National Enforcement Handbook. These are the things that we are offering to do, and can do.

And I want to look at those 300,000 new homes, in a different way now,

because I see that as enormous, absolutely enormous.

I just think of the opportunities, enormous opportunities, exciting prospects and I'm talking in design and type.

I'm talking in diversity of homes.

I'm talking in technology of the home.

I'm talking environmentally of the home – carbon zero homes.

I'm taking creativity, in the style of the home, the type of living, reflecting the needs of people, whichever part of the housing ladder, young single people, divorcees, elderly, disabled people, families – all kinds of partnerships.

Each one of these needs a different type of home.

Are we really reflecting those different types of homes and needs?

I speak to young people across the country and they say these homes don't really reflect what we'd like to see. Some want a family home, some want a bigger home, some want what they see as more like a future community – living in an exceptional space, maybe with a shared gym, maybe with a shared space downstairs, and within it an apartment as their own home, these would be much cheaper in price, a smaller apartment that they could own.

Surely between us, looking across what's happening in the world, we can get the homes that different generations want.

And what about the jobs and the careers to build all these homes, we need to think about that. We need to be opening up this house building to SME's, bringing them onboard, bringing it to communities, bringing it to the self-build and bringing in modern methods of construction.

We are now at a transformational turning point where we can make homes by manufacturing them at a very high specification.

Cars, over the years, have gone smarter, faster, sleeker, leaner.

Phones are no longer about talking to one another, they are computers in your pocket, connecting you with the world.

TV's are bigger, are flatter, are high definition.

Our houses have to be exactly the same, replicate this change, so we can build them faster, sleeker, environmentally friendlier, cheaper and what people want.

Because that is what it's about, it is about the customer. What do they want?

And that is what we've got to be on the side of the person who needs that home, who knows they are putting pretty much all the money they earn into that home, and so it has to be what they want, and not what they are given

and just have to accept!

And, we are going to strengthen up home owner's rights as well, as we consult on a future home owners Ombudsman.

Because now, (as we leave the E.U. and set about building 300,000 homes a year) we could become global leaders in the world of house building, of high end engineering, manufacturing, 3D specification, architecture and traditional build too.

And with that, I see clusters of excellence across the country, of where modular building is being developed – in the North East, Yorkshire, the North West, – I see in my mind's eye, just like you see homes in your mind's eye, I see, a Centre of Construction Excellence being established in the North of the country, combining all these things, so we can have a newly found industry. You're not just living in a home, you can prosper from having a job in creating those homes, when we are building at such a significant scale and pace, the career opportunities are huge.

And we can set new housing standards for the rest of the world.

You talked about Brexit before because yes, we are moving into a world post the EU. With the government's help we are getting ready for Brexit, helping UK businesses get geared up for the challenges and opportunities ahead. We will be carrying over EU product requirements as valid for sale, to ensure smooth transition for the construction industry. And we're making sure we've got the skills here in the UK to deliver what we need for that next generation of homes, through our technical hubs, through our, as I see it, Centre of Excellence, which will be industry led, which can deliver training, right up to high end degree apprenticeships.

So we will be bold, we will be visionary, we will be setting the world alight as we go forward with what we can do. I remember somebody said to me, which made such a huge impact on me as a child, you know everything you see, was created within someone's mind, it never existed until somebody thought of it and then thought of a way to do it.

You are those people.

You are those architects, those visionaries, who set the scene.

Together we will do it.

We will do it together, and please know, the government will support you.

We have supported you.

Together we have to tackle this Great British housing building problem.

Thank you.

2019 Asma Jahangir scholarship awarded to the top-ranking female Chevening scholar

This annual scholarship, which was launched last year, honours the legacy of the late human rights champion Asma Jahangir. Each year the scholarship is awarded to the top-ranking female applicant in the competitive recruitment process.

Presenting the new scholarship, the British High Commissioner Thomas Drew said:

It is an honour to award the Asma Jahangir Scholarship to this year's top Pakistani female Chevening scholar, Hadiya Aziz.

I am delighted that Hadiya has secured a place at the University of Sussex to study Criminal Law and Justice.

This scholarship is a tribute to the remarkable work that Asma Jahangir did for the rights of women, children and oppressed people. We hope that the award will help the next generation build on her legacy.

Speaking at the event, Hadiya Aziz said:

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the British High Commission for bestowing upon me this highly prestigious and overwhelming Award.

For me, Asma Jahangir will always remain an icon, mentor and legend in the legal profession. She inspired so much passion and courage in me. From here on, I will strive to follow her example in achieving my goals to bring about reform in the justice system in Pakistan. My own practice, successes and wins will always be a tribute to the legacy of Ms. Asma Jahangir.

Chevening scholarships are awarded to outstanding emerging leaders to pursue a one-year Master's programme at any UK university. The scholarship programme provides a unique opportunity to future leaders, influencers, and decision-makers from all over the world to develop professionally and academically, to build networks, to experience UK culture, and to form lasting positive relationships with the UK. This year, 53 Pakistanis have been awarded Chevening scholarships.

More information

The application window for the 2020/2021 Chevening scholarships is open now. Potential candidates should visit [the Chevening website](#).

Further information

Chevening scholarships are the UK government's global scholarship programme, funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) and partner organisations. The scholarships support study at UK universities – mostly one year master's degrees – for individuals with demonstrable potential to become future leaders, decision-makers, and opinion formers.

Chevening began in 1983 and has developed into a prestigious international awards scheme. There are over 50,000 Chevening Alumni around the world who comprise an influential and highly regarded global network.

For updates on the British High Commission, please follow our social media channels:

Contact
British High Commission
Islamabad
tel. 0300 500 5306

[No lecture – just sound advice for students](#)

Counter Terrorism Policing is calling on students to remember three words that could save their life.

Those starting or returning to university and college this month and are being urged to read Run, Hide, Tell advice, which explains what to do in the event of a firearms or weapons attack.

University and college security managers are encouraged to support this advice. A toolkit is available by contacting your local CTSA.

The message comes after it was recently revealed that the number of attacks foiled by police and security services, since the Westminster atrocity in March 2017, has increased from 19 to 22.

The UK's Senior National Coordinator for Protective Security, Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D'Orsi, says:

There is no specific intelligence to show that colleges and universities are being targeted, and the chances of being caught up in a terrorist incident are low. But sadly we saw in 2017, and more recently, that attacks can be carried out anywhere.

Starting university and college is an exciting time for students. We know many people will have seen our safety advice during the festival season and we want to take this opportunity to remind everyone it is really important to stay alert. This simple, straightforward information could save lives.

We are also encouraging students to play their part in keeping everyone safe by reporting any suspicious behaviour.

If anyone gets caught up in a firearms or weapons attack, police advice is:

- Run to a place of safety. This is a far better option than to surrender or negotiate. If there is nowhere to go then...
- Hide, it's better than to confront. Remember to turn your phone to silent and turn off vibrate. Barricade yourself in if you can. Then finally, and only when it is safe to do so...
- Tell the police by calling 999.

Remember if you see anything suspicious that gives you cause for concern, trust your instincts and ACT. Students should contact college or university security staff or report online here.

In an emergency always call 999.