

[Press release: Highways England footage shows dangers of driving too close](#)

The clip – captured by one of the dashcams in a Highways England patrol vehicle on the M6 in Cheshire – shows how quickly an incident can happen if motorists don't leave plenty of space between themselves and the vehicle in front.

The footage shows several cars braking sharply and one being struck by a HGV as an unrelated incident unfolds up ahead of travelling traffic.

[Highways England – Dangers of driving too close!](#)

Highways England's Head of Road Safety Richard Leonard said:

This footage is a startling reminder about the dangers of driving too closely to the vehicle in front.

It clearly shows that if you get too close to the car in front, you won't be able to react and stop in time if they suddenly brake.

We also know that tailgating makes the driver in front feel targeted and victimised, distracting their attention from the road ahead and making them more likely to make a mistake.

It is intimidating and frightening if you're on the receiving end. If that leads to a collision, then people in both vehicles could end up seriously injured or killed. We want everyone to get home safe and well.

If you wonder whether you are 'space invading', then remember the Highway Code, which says that drivers should allow at least a two second gap, which should be doubled on wet roads. If you are tailgated, then avoid speeding up, slowing down or staring in the rear-view mirror. Reduce the risk to yourself by driving normally, signalling clearly and allowing people to overtake.

A survey by Highways England reveals that tailgating is the biggest single bugbear that drivers have about other road users. And in-car research – using dashcams, facial recognition, emotion tracking and heart monitors – reveals that a driver's typical reaction to someone who tailgates them is surprise, anger and contempt, with a spike in heart rate.

Nearly 9 out of 10 people say they have either been tailgated or seen it. And more than a quarter of drivers admitted to tailgating.

The campaign has won the support of several high-profile advocates including

Formula 1 world champion Nigel Mansell and former TopGear 'Stig' Ben Collins.

Ben – best known for his role on BBC motoring show TopGear as the 'tame' racing driver in the white suit – has coached hundreds of celebrities from Tom Cruise to Lionel Richie around the race-track and is also a championship winning Le Mans racing driver.

He says motorists should make sure they leave plenty of distance between themselves and the vehicle in front because driving too closely can hinder braking distances and visibility of incidents up ahead.

Highways England has a [dedicated website](#) offering advice on how to drive safely if people find themselves the victim of tailgating.

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.

[Press release: New powers to investigate stillbirths](#)

- Government acts to help bereaved parents find answers following stillbirth
- New plans for coroners to investigate stillbirths
- Part of wider plans to help prevent future stillbirths and improve maternal care

The government today (26 March 2019) launched a consultation on proposals to give coroners the power to investigate all full-term stillbirths – which would help provide parents with vital information on what went wrong and why, while ensuring any mistakes are identified to prevent future deaths.

At present, coroners can only hold inquests for babies who have shown signs of life after being born. They cannot investigate where the pregnancy appeared healthy but the baby was stillborn. In these circumstances the Healthcare Safety Investigation Branch must investigate the death.

While many parents are satisfied with existing processes, some have raised concerns about the inconsistency of investigations and have called for a more

transparent and independent system.

Ministers are therefore asking for views on whether coroners should be able to investigate stillbirths. As judicial office holders, coroners would not only be able to provide parents with much needed answers but also make recommendations to prevent future avoidable deaths.

In addition, the proposed system will ensure that both bereaved parents and medical staff are involved at all stages of the process.

Justice Minister Edward Argar said:

A stillbirth is a tragedy which has a profound effect upon bereaved families. We must ensure that every case is thoroughly and independently investigated.

These proposals would ensure that bereaved parents have their voices heard in the investigation, and allow lessons to be learnt which would help to prevent future stillbirths.

Health Minister Jackie Doyle-Price said:

We want to do everything we can to make pregnancy safer, by continually learning to improve the care on offer so fewer people to have to experience the terrible tragedy of losing a child and those who do get the answers and support they deserve.

Rates of stillbirths in England are the lowest on record, but we're committed to delivering on our ambition in the NHS Long Term Plan to accelerate action to halve this number by 2025.

This is a complex issue and it's important we get it right by listening carefully to those who are affected by these issues, so I urge everybody to have their say on this consultation. By sharing your experiences you can ensure any decision we make puts women, loved ones and their babies first.

Kate Mulley, Director of Research, Education and Policy at Sands said:

At Sands bereaved parents often tell us how vitally important it is to understand why their baby died and that the best legacy for their baby is to ensure that lessons are learned to prevent future deaths.

We believe their views must be taken into account when determining any changes in the role of coroners. This consultation by the Ministry of Justice raises important questions and we would encourage anyone affected to make their views known.”

The joint consultation from the Ministry of Justice and the Department for Health and Social Care seeks a wide range of views, from bereaved parents, the organisations that support them or that provide advice to pregnant women, researchers, health professionals and healthcare providers, as well as those working for coronial services.

Under the proposed system:

- Coroners will have powers to investigate all full-term stillbirths occurring from 37 weeks pregnancy
- The coroner will consider whether any lessons can be learned which could prevent future stillbirths
- Coroners will not have to gain consent or permission from any third party in exercising this power
- Coronal investigations will not replace current investigations undertaken by the hospital or NHS agencies

Whilst the UK’s rates of stillbirth are the lowest on record and we have seen year-on-year falls in the proportions of pregnancies that end in a stillbirth, the government is clear that more must be done.

These measures are an important step towards delivering the government’s commitment to reduce the rate of stillbirths and make the NHS the safest place in the world to give birth.

Notes to editors:

- Coroners’ duties are supported by a number of powers and safeguards set out in statute, which support an unbiased and transparent process.
- This builds on the government’s relaunched Maternity Safety Strategy (November 2017) to support the government’s ambition to halve the rate of stillbirths by 2025. The then Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt MP committed to consider whether and how coroners could carry out investigations into babies who are stillborn at term.
- The Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Bill requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to Parliament on whether it will and if so how, the law ought to be changed to enable or require coroners to investigate still-births.
- Coronal investigations would not replace the role others have in reviewing stillbirths such as those undertaken by local NHS services using the Perinatal Mortality Review Tool and those provided by the Health Service Investigation Branch (HSIB). Currently all term stillbirths where the baby dies during labour or birth are investigated by the HSIB.
- As with current coronial inquests such reviews may form part of the coroner’s investigation into a stillbirth.
- Coronal stillbirth investigations would reflect the rules and

principles that currently underpin the coronial process, including those relating to the conduct of an inquest and the coroner's powers to access evidence and manage the disclosure of documents, to order relevant medical examinations of the stillborn baby and the placenta, to retain legal custody over the stillborn baby and the placenta until they are no longer required for the purposes of the investigation, and to compel witnesses to give evidence.

- Under current law, the role of the coroner is to determine how, when and where someone died if the death was violent or unnatural, if its cause is unknown, or where the deceased died whilst in custody or under state detention. The coroner's duty is in relation to adults, children and babies who were born alive, but not stillbirths.
- If there is any doubt whether a baby was born alive, a coroner can undertake enquiries as to whether there is a duty to investigate, but they will not investigate further if they conclude that it was a stillbirth.
- The [consultation](#) will run for 12 weeks, closing on 18 June 2019.
- The proposals would apply in England and Wales.

[News story: Companies House named Employer of the Year at Wales HR Awards](#)

Launched in 2017, the awards ceremony is the flagship event of the Wales HR Network, a leading professional thought sharing and networking group created and run by Cardiff-based commercial law firm Darwin Gray and Acorn, Wales' leading recruitment specialist.

Hosted by the BBC's Sian Lloyd, the awards recognise the best HR professionals at all levels, from apprentices to directors, and organisations as a whole across various industry sectors in Wales – showcasing the commitment, hard work and achievements of individuals and teams within the HR profession over the last 12 months.

Director of People Transformation at Companies House, Angela Lewis said:

We're absolutely thrilled that all the hard work we've done with our brilliant colleagues to make Companies House an exceptional place to work has been recognised. We'll continue to find creative ways to ensure everyone can flourish and keep working as one to achieve great results.

Our HR team and Chief Executive Louise Smyth receiving the Employer of the

Year award.

Darwin Gray's Head of Employment Law and HR Fflur Jones said:

Employer of the Year is always a tough category for the judges and this year was no exception! With some high-quality contenders, Companies House was a well-deserved winner, showing demonstrable improvements for their employees and workplace culture.

Director of Operations for South Wales at Acorn Recruitment Maria Larcombe added:

Companies House has achieved some fantastic things through their employees and are a deserving winner of Employer of the Year. Its Flourish programme has championed diversity and inclusion to achieve 'a real sense of community' throughout the organisation. It's been absolutely fantastic to see so many excellent HR professionals come together to showcase the talent within HR in Wales.

See the full list of [2019 Wales HR Awards winners](#).

[Press release: Three award wins for Highways England projects](#)

Innovative projects including a virtual reality training programme to improve roadworker safety, a time-saving system to install drainage more quickly and work to repair Spaghetti Junction have picked up prestigious awards.

Picking up the Best Innovation Award 2019 title was Kier, in partnership with Highways England, for the pioneering Aqua-Slot drain developed for the M6 motorway upgrade between junctions 13 and 15.

The judges were impressed by the development of the pre-cast drainage system to reduce installation times, costs and network disruption. They commented:

This required early contractor involvement at various levels within the supply chain to make sure procurement, manufacturing and construction of the units were phased efficiently and safely. The reduced timescales and installation rates benefited the end-user and was only possible by this collaborative and innovative approach.

While the Best Innovation Highly Commended accolade went to the virtual reality training scheme used for those working on the M6 junctions 2 to 4 upgrade.

Working on behalf of Highways England, Balfour Beatty Vinci are using virtual reality simulators to educate the workforce on the perils of working on a construction site.

The fully-immersive simulation is designed to prevent on-site accidents by making projects safer through improved training. Users are given different perspectives of potentially dangerous situations to develop a better understanding of safe working zones.

Judges were impressed with the development of the virtual reality software which “allows workers the opportunity to see the hazards in a safe environment therefore encouraging safe and controlled practices on site”.

It was described as “a great demonstration of innovation in the construction industry”.

A virtual reality training session in action

Winning the Best Small Project Highly Commended award was the Kier team working on the re-waterproofing and concrete repairs at the A38(M) Gravelly Hill Viaduct for Highways England.

This is challenging maintenance on Spaghetti Junction, at a very busy part of the road network. Judges felt the project team put the ‘customer first’ during the work.

They said the scheme used some ‘really innovative methods but also with excellent stakeholder engagement. These proactive communications included regular newsletters but also working closely with Highways England to disseminate information of closures through TV, radio and Twitter.’

Highways England smart motorways sponsor and WM CIHT committee member Paul Unwin said:

This year’s awards showcased another diverse range of submissions and winners.

It demonstrates the exciting range of developments that are being generated in the region and how the West Midlands is leading the way in innovations.

The CIHT awards celebrate the highways and transportation industry, rewarding the achievements of those working in the sector and promoting their professionalism as best practice to a wider industry audience.

This year’s annual West Midlands awards took place at the Burlington Hotel in Birmingham

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[Press release: Secretary of State approves first City Deal for Northern Ireland](#)

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP, has today signed the Heads of Terms for the Belfast City Deal, alongside the Belfast City Regional Deal partners and the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

This is a major milestone towards the completion of the first City Deal for Northern Ireland. The Belfast Region City Deal will see the UK Government invest £350 million into the Belfast Region over the next 15 years. It is proposed that this figure will be matched by the Northern Ireland Executive once the devolved institutions are restored.

The City Deal will be further bolstered by co-investment of upwards of £150m from Belfast Region City Deal partners and investment by the private sector is anticipated to bring the total investment package to over £1 billion.

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, the Rt Hon Karen Bradley MP said:

I am absolutely delighted to sign the heads of terms for the Belfast City Deal today.

The UK Government has committed £350 million of funding to support and encourage economic development across the region, creating jobs and boosting prosperity.

I am also engaging closely with the Chancellor to secure a financial announcement for the Derry-Londonderry Region City Deal and help unlock the huge potential that Derry-Londonderry has to

offer. The UK Government is committed to developing a comprehensive and ambitious set of City Deals across Northern Ireland and delivering a stronger economy that works for everyone.

It is hoped the deal will see the delivery of more than 20 projects to help create up to 20,000 new and better jobs alongside an increase in productivity levels, as well as having a positive impact on the most deprived communities, delivering a balanced spread of benefits across the region.

Speaking on behalf of the Belfast Region City Deal partners, Belfast Lord Mayor Councillor Deirdre Hargey said:

Today's signing of a Heads of Terms for the Belfast Region City Deal is a significant milestone in our journey towards substantial investment in inclusive regional regeneration.

It's testament to the power of collaboration and partnership and we look forward to progressing plans with our wide range of partners, including our colleagues working to deliver a programme of investment for Derry-Londonderry and the North West region.

This is an investment which will improve quality of life for people living here and further enhance our attractiveness as a destination of choice for investors, visitors, new residents and students alike.

Communities Secretary, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP, said:

This is tremendous news for the communities and businesses living and operating in the Belfast City region.

This transformative deal will bolster innovation, productivity and prosperity across the region, and I am delighted to see the hard work which has gone into this deal come to fruition.

The ambitious programme will help grow the region's business strengths in life and health sciences; ICT, digital and creative industries, and advanced manufacturing. It will also support digital development and tourism-led regeneration across the entire region, underpinned by infrastructure developments and investment in skills to connect people to jobs and services.

For more information on the proposed programme of investment, [click here](#). You can also follow #BRcitydeal on Twitter.

ENDS

Click [Heads of Terms – Belfast Regions City Deal](#) (PDF, 33.6KB, 1 page) for the full Heads of Terms document which sets out further details of the projects being proposed. All projects will be subject to the approval of final business cases.

Belfast Region City Deal incorporates six of the 11 councils in Northern Ireland:

- Antrim & Newtownabbey
- Ards & North Down
- Belfast
- Lisburn and Castlereagh
- Newry, Mourne & Down
- Mid & East Antrim

Alongside Queen's University and Ulster University, and Regional Further Education colleges, including Belfast Met, Northern Regional College, South Eastern Regional College and the Southern Regional College, it provides a truly collaborative approach to this multi-million pound investment programme and helping to drive economic development across the region, boosting jobs, creating opportunity and encouraging further inward investment.

Some of the 22 proposed projects include:

- Innovation and digital – creating global centres of innovation excellence in partnership with enhanced digital capability and connectivity;
- Infrastructure – including Phase 2 of the Belfast Rapid Transit scheme;
- Tourism and regeneration – delivering a series of internationally visible tourism products and the transformation of key towns across the region; and *Employability and skills – facilitating a strong, complementary employability and skills package to deliver the right skills base to support the growth and opportunities created by this Belfast Region City Deal investment.