

Proposed changes to penalties for motoring offences

Introduction

Thank you for responding to our consultation on changes to current motoring offences and the potential introduction of other offences.

Closing date is 11 May 2026.

Accessibility statement

Read our [accessibility statement for SmartSurvey forms \[opens in a new window\]](#).

Confidentiality and data protection

The Department for Transport (DfT) is running this consultation on changes to current motoring offences and the potential introduction of other offences.

View our [DfT online form and survey privacy notice \[opens in a new window\]](#) for more information on how your personal data is processed in relation to this survey.

In addition we are asking about your relationship with driving and older drivers plus your age and gender in order to understand your connection to the topic.

Do not include personal information in your responses unless specifically requested.

Personal details

1. What is your name?

2. What is your email?

3. Are you responding on behalf of an organisation?

Yes

No (Go to 'Proposals')

Organisation details

4. What is the name of your organisation?

Road Safety GB

Proposals

Enforcement is an important driver of road safety - all the evidence shows that where it is done effectively it reduces the number of people killed or seriously injured (KSIs). That's why it is an important enabler of the safe system, and a crucial part of the wider road safety strategy.

The motoring offences and their penalties are set out in the [Road Traffic Act 1988 \[opens in a new window\]](#) and the [Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 \[opens in a new window\]](#). They have only been subject to limited changes since then and a wider review is long overdue. Meanwhile the families of victims, parliamentarians and others have campaigned for many years for changes to the law.

Now is the time to take action.

We are committed to reviewing the whole framework for motoring offences to:

- bring them up to date
- ensure that penalties are appropriate to the harm caused
- ensure they act as a suitable deterrent

Holding a driving licence is not an automatic right. We want to make effective use of the penalty points system and ultimately licence disqualification or vehicle seizure, to get the most serious offenders off the road.

We will:

- make roads safer by focusing on the offences associated with the greatest impacts on the number of KSIs
- ensure that the motoring offences framework is clear, and where motorists endanger others, their behaviour has consequences

We know that the majority of motorists are responsible and law abiding, but not unreasonably, they and other road users want to see law breaking dealt with, to make all our communities safer. This is key to the government's Plan for change.

We are seeking views on the current motoring offences of:

- drink and drug driving
- non-seat belt use
- failure to stop and report
- introducing new penalties for certain offences and other road traffic matters

Any changes to legal penalties must take into account the [recommendations from the Independent sentencing review led by the Right Honourable David Gauke \[opens in a new window\]](#).

[Full information is given in our consultation material \[opens in a new window\]](#).

5. In your view, should the legal alcohol limit for drink and drive offences in England and Wales:

- be lowered
- stay the same (Go to 'Stay same')
- don't know (Go to 'Novice drivers: alcohol limit')

6. What legal limit do you think is appropriate?

50mg in 100ml of blood

7. Why do you think this legal limit is appropriate?

Reducing deaths and serious injuries remains central to our mission, and we support evidence informed measures that help achieve national casualty reduction ambitions.

We note that lowering the drink drive limit to 50mg/100ml is widely recognised as an effective, evidence-based intervention internationally, and forms part of the broader Safe System. Most European nations already operate at this level, and aligning with these standards would support consistency, safety, and public expectations.

While criticisms that it would not affect drink drive collisions involving people already well over the current limit, it would likely influence those who, after one or two drinks are compliant with the current limit, but nevertheless at increased risk of being involved in a collision that would not currently be recorded as alcohol related.

While outside of our remit to comment on specific legislative details, Road Safety GB can support ongoing and future efforts to strengthen education and awareness regarding any new drink-drive limits.

[Now go to 'Novice drivers: alcohol limit']

Stay same

8. Why do you think the legal limit should stay the same?



Novice drivers: alcohol limit

We are using the term novice driver to mean a driver who has passed their test less than 2 years ago.

9. In your view, should the legal alcohol limit for drink and drive offences in England and Wales be lower for novice drivers than for other drivers?

- Yes
- No (Go to 'Not lowered')
- Don't know (Go to 'High risk offender (HRO) criteria')

Lower limit

10. What legal limit do you think is appropriate for novice drivers?

11. Why do you think this legal limit is appropriate?

[Now go to 'High risk offender (HRO) criteria']

12. Why do you think a lower legal limit for novice drivers is inappropriate?

Introducing a lower drink-drive limit only for novice drivers would add a layer of complexity to enforcement. Effective policy relies heavily on clear, enforceable rules backed by consistent enforcement.

A mixed system (e.g., 20 mg for novices; 50 mg for all other drivers) risks diluting the message that no amount of alcohol is safe to combine with driving.

Furthermore, alcohol involvement among young drivers is a behavioural risk, not a physiological one that would justify a different limit.

Question 13: In your view, if the legal alcohol limit for drink and drive offences in England and Wales is lowered, should the level of driver penalty be altered

No

Question 13a: Why do you think this

The current penalty framework is well-established, widely understood, and proportionate to the seriousness of drink-driving offences. Changing both the limit and the associated penalties simultaneously would introduce unnecessary complexity and risk confusing the public.

Maintaining the existing penalty structure would support clarity in enforcement and communication, ensuring the focus remains on the key behavioural message: any amount of alcohol impairs driving and increases risk. Altering penalties at the same time as changing the limit is not necessary to achieve improved safety outcomes and may undermine public understanding during a period when simple, consistent messaging is essential.

High risk offender (HRO) criteria

The HRO scheme was introduced in 1983. The scheme is intended to manage drivers who have a dependence on alcohol, or persistently misuse alcohol, which presents a serious road safety risk.

The current [HRO scheme \[opens in a new window\]](#) uses the existing drink driving legal limits for England and Wales. The legislation underpinning it means that someone becomes a HRO when driving with at least 2.5 times the current legal alcohol limit or the equivalent measures of:

- 87.5 µg of alcohol per 100ml of breath
- 200mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood
- 267.5mg of alcohol per 100ml of urine

HRO's licenses will not be restored after their disqualification period has been completed, until they satisfy the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) that they no longer pose a risk as a potential drink driver. If the drink drive alcohol limit was lowered, it makes sense to adjust the HRO threshold down accordingly.

13. In your view, if the legal alcohol limit for drink and drive offences in England and Wales is lowered, should the criteria for being considered a high-risk offender be lowered accordingly?

Yes

- No
- Don't know (Go to 'Drink and drug offence')

14. Why did you give this answer?

If government lowers the legal drink drive limit, it is important that the HRO criteria are reviewed accordingly to ensure they remain consistent with the new framework and continue to identify the highest risk offenders effectively. Aligning thresholds with any new limit would help maintain a clear link between risk, enforcement and access to rehabilitation, supporting wider efforts to reduce road harm.

Drink and drug offence

15. In your view, should a person suspected of committing a:

	have their driving licence suspended until attendance at court	have their driving licence suspended until guilty plea	have their driving licence suspended pending forensic analysis being undertaken	not have their driving licence suspended
drink offence:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
drug offence:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Road Safety GB does not support giving police the power to suspend driving licences before a driver has been found guilty in court. Licence loss is a significant penalty and should only follow a judicial decision, not police discretion. Granting police the ability to suspend licences early risks undermining the principle of "innocent until proven guilty," could remove the urgency to progress cases to court, and may unfairly pressure drivers into guilty pleas. The police are an enforcement body, not a punishment body, and introducing pre-conviction sanctions would create confusion, inconsistency, and the potential for serious personal and professional impact on individuals who may ultimately be acquitted.

If this is taken forward, there should be discretion allowed to police in when these powers are exercised, with guidance that it should be applied where there is a high risk of reoffending.

Government ministers have listened to families recount instances where their loved ones have been killed or seriously injured by drink and drug drivers, or other offenders, who have then been free to drive for lengthy periods before the case concludes.

These families call for a similar power to that set out above, so that those arrested and charged with death by dangerous or careless driving offences have their driving licence suspended, until their first court appearance.

There have been in total several hundred thousand signatures on petitions calling for police to be given the power to suspend the licences of those under investigation of road crime in the most serious of cases (including drink and drug driving).

There would be the same judicial oversight of this power.

16. In your view, should a person who is under investigation for a serious driving offence that leads to a:

	Yes	No	Don't know
fatality have their driving licence suspended	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
serious injury have their driving licence suspended	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Road Safety GB does not support giving police the power to suspend driving licences before a driver has been found guilty in court. Licence loss is a significant penalty and should only follow a judicial decision, not police discretion.

17. Do you think the current minimum disqualification period for the offence causing death by careless driving while under the influence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
drink of 5 years with compulsory extended retest is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
drugs of 5 years with compulsory extended retest is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

We believe the existing minimum is appropriate, and rather than increasing it, priority should be placed on ensuring magistrates and judges are supported with better guidance and education to apply higher disqualification periods where appropriate. Strengthening judicial understanding and consistency will have a greater impact than raising the statutory minimum.

The current minimum disqualification period for the offence of driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle:

- while under the influence of drink or drugs of is 1 year or 3 years if convicted twice in 10 years
- with alcohol concentration above prescribed limit of 1 year or 3 years if convicted twice in 10 years

18. Do you think the current minimum disqualification period for the offence:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a motor vehicle while under the influence of drink is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
driving a motor vehicle while under the influence of drugs is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
being in charge of a motor vehicle while under the influence of drink is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
being in charge X of a motor vehicle while under the influence of drugs is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

We believe the existing minimum is appropriate, and rather than increasing it, priority should be placed on ensuring magistrates and judges are supported with better guidance and education to apply higher disqualification periods where appropriate. Strengthening judicial understanding and consistency will have a greater impact than raising the statutory minimum.

The current minimum disqualification period for the offence driving or being in charge of a motor vehicle with alcohol concentration above the prescribed limit of 1 year or 3 years if convicted twice in 10 years.

19. Do you think the current minimum disqualification period for the offence:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a motor vehicle with alcohol concentration above the prescribed limit is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
being in charge of a motor vehicle with an alcohol concentration above the prescribed limit is appropriate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

We believe the existing minimum is appropriate, and rather than increasing it, priority should be placed on ensuring magistrates and judges are supported with better guidance and education to apply higher disqualification periods where appropriate. Strengthening judicial understanding and consistency will have a greater impact than raising the statutory minimum.

20. In your view, should new powers be created to allow the seizure of vehicles of a person arrested for drink and drug driving?

Yes

No

Don't know (Go to 'Alcolocks')

21. Why did you give this answer?

We recognise that removing access to a vehicle can act as a visible deterrent and may reduce opportunities for repeat offending, supporting wider public safety aims. Any use of seizure powers would need to sit within a balanced, multiagency approach that includes enforcement, rehabilitation, and behaviour change support.

Seizing a vehicle should never be an automatic part of the process, with discretion needed in all cases. For example, in some cases the vehicle may be relied upon by somebody else for work or caring responsibilities. There is also no distinction currently between how the seizure would work if the owner and registered keeper were different. Indiscrete seizures could penalise non offenders associated with the offender.

Alcolocks

We believe that the option of fitting an alcohol ignition lock (alcolock) as part of a sentence for drink driving, would be an effective measure in reducing reoffending. The '[Road Safety Act 2006 \[opens in a new window\]](#)' provided legislation to enable alcolocks to be so used. This was subject to a “sunset clause” (a time limit on legislation, after which it expires) which meant that they could not be introduced.

Should their future use be legislated we will focus on working collaboratively to enable their rollout.

Alcolocks are used widely in America, Canada, Europe, New Zealand and Australia. A [2017 synthesis of studies examining the effectiveness of alcolocks on reoffending rates \[opens in a new window\]](#) found that they are effective at reducing reoffending of drink driving whilst they are installed. However, once alcolock systems were removed, reoffending rates return to similar levels to comparison groups without alcolock systems.

22. In your view, should alcohol ignition locks (alcolocks) be allowed to be used as part of a drink drive rehabilitation process?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know (Go to 'Analysis')

23. Why did you give this answer?

We welcome the Government's continued focus on reducing drink-driving, which remains one of the most significant and preventable causes of death and serious injury on Britain's roads. Despite decades of progress in road safety, drink-driving accounts for approximately one in six road fatalities, making it the second leading cause of road deaths after speed-related collisions.

Given the scale and persistence of this harm, we believe that further action is urgently required, particularly in relation to interventions targeted at high-risk and repeat offenders.

Alcohol interlock devices (alcolocks) are a proven, evidence-based tool for preventing reoffending and supporting long-term behaviour change. International experience from New Zealand, Canada, the United States, and most European nations demonstrates that alcolock programmes can reduce repeat drink-driving by up to 70%, with jurisdictions reporting an estimated 15–16% reduction in alcohol-related crash deaths when interlock laws are mandatory.

These benefits are particularly important given that current penalties are not functioning as an effective deterrent. International research consistently shows that 50–75% of disqualified drink-drivers continue to drive illegally during their ban. Alcolocks directly address this enforcement gap by preventing a vehicle from starting if alcohol above a preset threshold is detected on the driver's breath. They provide real-time, moment-of-risk protection, safeguarding the public precisely at the point when a driver attempts to start their vehicle after consuming alcohol.

The case for action is further strengthened by public opinion. Recent polling from the RAC shows that 82% of drivers support the introduction of alcohol locks for drink-driving offenders, demonstrating clear societal readiness for this type of intervention as part of a broader national road safety strategy.

Analysis

There has been a notable increase in the number of forensic blood samples that are needed to investigate drug driving offences. This has created significant challenges both in terms of cost and forensic capacity. There have been many instances where it has not been possible to take blood from a suspect for medical reasons.

We would welcome the public's views on the use of alternative forensic testing procedures, such as testing oral fluid, saliva or sweat. Any alternatives would have to be fully explored on a scientific basis together with a cost benefit analysis looking at how they could be brought into operational use. Introduction of any alternative forensic testing procedures would also require a change in legislation.

24. In your view, should oral fluid and other samples (such as saliva and sweat) be used in drug driving forensic analysis?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know (Go to 'Hospital procedures')

25. Why did you give this answer?

Road Safety GB notes that decisions on drug drive evidential processes, including the use of oral fluid testing, fall outside our professional scope, and we defer to the appropriate enforcement and forensic authorities on these technical matters.

However, we recognise the road safety risks created by long delays in the current system, which can allow high risk individuals to continue driving while investigations are pending. Faster evidential processes, provided they meet reliability standards, would support wider public safety aims by helping ensure that dangerous drivers are identified and dealt with more quickly.

Hospital procedures

We believe that the complex area of taking samples in hospitals, with the current requirement for permission from the individual to be given before a sample can be taken, should be revisited. Delays in analysing samples from unconscious patients can slow down investigations into offences.

Any changes to hospital procedures for drink and drug driving suspects must balance the need to safeguard the suspect's rights with the need for timely analysis of samples to secure best evidence.

There are also instances where police were unable to secure the attendance of an approved medical practitioner to take a forensic sample.

We would welcome comments on whether there are any alternatives we should consider.

26. In your view, could hospital procedures for drink and drug driving suspects be improved?

- Yes
- No (Go to 'Law and practice')
- Don't know (Go to 'Law and practice')

Hospital procedure improvements

27. How do you think hospital procedures for drink and drug driving suspects could be improved?

Road Safety GB notes that decisions on hospital procedures fall outside our professional scope, and we defer to the appropriate enforcement and forensic authorities on these technical matters.

Law and practice

These questions allow respondents to reflect on current law and policy and procedure in respect of drink and drug driving.

28. Are there any other changes to current law and practice regarding drink and drug testing that you would like to suggest?

- Yes
- No (Go to 'Random breath testing')
- Don't know (Go to 'Random breath testing')

29. How do you think current law and practice regarding drink and drug testing could be improved?

Road Safety GB would also like to raise a wider point regarding the practical driving test. We believe there may be value in exploring the introduction of a preliminary breath test and drug swipe test before the practical driving test begins. This would not be for evidential purposes, but at a level sufficient to prevent a test from proceeding if the candidate is under the influence. The cost could reasonably be incorporated into the test fee, and such a measure could also enhance safeguarding for driving examiners. If full implementation for every test is not feasible, a random approach, for example, testing every third candidate, could be considered.

Random breath testing

In Northern Ireland since 2016 (and also in the Republic of Ireland) police [have had the power to conduct a random breath test at checkpoints set up on roads if authorised by a police inspector \[opens in a new window\]](#), providing there are sufficient grounds to believe that this is required to enforce drink driving powers.

Currently in GB, the police have power to require a breath (drug) test if:

- they suspect the presence of drink and drugs
- the driver has been involved in an accident, according to the legislation
- the driver has committed a moving traffic offence

30. In your view, should random breath testing (mirroring the powers in Northern Ireland) be introduced in England and Wales?

Yes

No

Don't know (Go to 'Other evidence')

Random breath testing reasoning

31. Why did you give this answer?

International evidence shows that when drivers believe they can be stopped and tested at any time, impaired driving reduces. Random breath testing can act as a strong deterrent and protective measure, reducing the risk of serious harm from impaired collisions.

Other evidence

32. Provide any other evidence or comments you have about the current penalty framework for drink and drug driving offences.

Comment:

[Attach relevant documents to your response]

Not wearing a seat belt

It has been mandatory since 1991 for drivers and passengers to [wear a seat belt when travelling in any motor vehicle unless medically exempt, or under specified circumstances such as a driver reversing their vehicle or a taxi driver plying for hire \[opens in a new window\]](#). It is also mandatory for drivers to ensure that children under the age of 14 in their vehicle wear a seat belt or are secured with an appropriate child seat or restraint.

The sanction for failing to do so is a Fixed Penalty Notice of £100 or, if the case goes to court, a maximum fine of £500. Failure to wear a seat belt is not currently an endorsable offence meaning the offender does not incur penalty points.

We are asking for your views on whether drivers and passengers failing to wear a seat belt, and drivers who fail to ensure children travelling in the vehicle are suitably restrained, should receive 3 penalty points on their driving licence.

We carry out observational surveys of seat belt wearing every few years on these subjects. The [most recent survey \[opens in a new window\]](#) shows, for weekdays in England in autumn 2023, that 97.6% of all vehicle drivers were observed using a seat belt and that 95.2% of all vehicle front seat passengers were observed using a seat belt.

However, there is a substantial problem associated with the minority of people who choose not to wear a seat belt. The [latest road casualty statistics for 2024 \[opens in a new window\]](#) show that 25% of car occupant fatalities in reported road collisions were not wearing a seat belt and the average over the past 5 years (from 2020 to 2024) was 24%. This indicates quite starkly that car occupants who do not wear a seat belt are disproportionately likely to be killed in road collisions.

33. In your view, should drivers receive 3 penalty points if they fail to wear their own seat belt?

- Yes
- No (Go to 'Disagreement and seat belt reasoning')
- Don't know (Go to 'Children seatbelts')

Agreement seat belt reasoning

34. Why did you give this answer?

We recognise that seat belts remain one of the most effective life-saving measures, and non-use continues to contribute to preventable deaths and serious injuries. Strengthening consequences for non-compliance could help reinforce the importance of wearing a seat belt and support wider efforts to reduce road harm.


35. Why do you think this number of penalty points is appropriate?

3 Penalty points would be in line with other offences such as speeding and would be proportionate whilst helping to reinforce the importance of wearing a seat belt.

[Now go to 'Children seatbelts']

Disagreement seat belt reasoning

36. Why did you give this answer?



Children seatbelts

37. In your view, should drivers receive penalty points if they fail to ensure that children under 14 wear seat belts and child restraints?

- Yes
- No (Go to 'Children seatbelts reasoning')
- Don't know (Go to 'Failure to stop and report')

Children seatbelts and reasoning

38. Why did you give this answer?

Ensuring a child's safety is a fundamental responsibility of any driver. Noncompliance remains a concern. Strengthening consequences for failing to use the correct child restraints could support safer behaviour and reinforce adults' responsibility to protect the most vulnerable road users.


39. Why do you think this number of penalty points is appropriate?

3 Penalty points would be in line with other offences such as speeding and would be proportionate whilst helping to reinforce the importance of wearing a seat belt.

[Now go to 'Failure to stop and report']

Children seatbelts reasoning

40. Why did you give this answer?



Failure to stop and report

Failure to stop and report a road traffic incident is unacceptable, and we are determined to combat this behaviour. The Road Traffic Act 1988 makes it a duty for drivers to stop, and report any collision, and to give information or documents as required. This must be within 24 hours of the incident where a collision has occurred resulting in:

- personal injury to a person other than the driver
- damage to another vehicle or trailer
- damage to an animal
- damage to any other property

Note the word “accident” is used in the legislation, but we use collision or incident in this report as it is the most appropriate terminology.

We are aware of the traumatic impacts that failure to stop and report incidents resulting in death or serious injury can have on victims, witnesses and family members. There have been petitions and parliamentary debates on this matter and many families, in outlining their desire to see changes to the law, have highlighted links to drink and drug driving. We understand the concerns about how this offence works, its maximum penalties and its scope.

Currently, the penalties for this offence are set at:

- 5 to 10 penalty points
- disqualification for 6 to 12 months
- up to a £5,000 fine
- up to 6 months’ imprisonment

We are aware of calls from parliamentarians, road safety stakeholders, the police, and victims’ families to introduce additional measures in respect to this area.

41. In your view, should the maximum penalties for the offence of failure to stop and report be increased?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know (Go to ‘New offense’)

Failure to stop and report reasoning

42. Why did you give this answer?

We recognise that leaving the scene of a collision, particularly one involving injury, is a serious breach of responsibility that undermines immediate care to victims. Strengthening penalties could help reinforce the message that drivers must always stop, assist and report, supporting wider efforts to reduce road harm and improve road-user behaviour.

New offence

43. In your view, should a new offence be created to cover situations in which a person could reasonably be assumed to have known that a collision resulted in:

	Yes	No	Don't know
death but failed to stop at the scene and report the collision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
serious injury but failed to stop at the scene and report the collision	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

We recognise that failing to stop after a collision involving lifechanging or fatal injuries is a serious breach of responsibility. A more robust, clearly defined offence for the most severe cases could help reinforce the duty of drivers to remain at the scene, support injured persons, and enable timely emergency response, core principles that align with adoption of the safe system approach.

This would also likely assist police investigations to help bring offenders to justice more quickly, with more efficient use of police time.

44. In your view, should a person be required to switch off their engine if stopped by the police?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know (Go to 'Failure to stop')

45. Why did you give this answer?

We support the proposal that a person should be required to switch off their engine when stopped by the police. Introducing such a requirement would deliver several important safety and operational benefits.

Requiring drivers to switch off their engines would reduce the risk of vehicles being used to flee the scene during a stop. Instances of “making off” represent a serious danger to officers, other road users, and the public. A clear legal requirement to switch off the engine when instructed would provide officers with an important tool to manage the risk of sudden or dangerous attempts to leave the scene. This measure would therefore strengthen officer safety and support more controlled and predictable roadside encounters.

There are additional environmental benefits to reducing unnecessary engine idling during police stops. Limiting idling helps to improve local air quality and reduce emissions. While the primary purpose of this requirement is safety, these secondary benefits are meaningful and should be recognised.

We note that modern vehicles, particularly those with keyless start systems or stop-start technology, may make enforcement less straightforward. These systems can mean that a vehicle remains in a “ready” state even after the physical key fob is removed or restarts automatically in certain circumstances. For this reason, the requirement should be framed around drivers following a lawful instruction from a police officer to switch off their engine. Importantly, failure to comply with such an instruction should constitute an offence. This approach provides clarity, ensures the rule is enforceable across different vehicle types, and maintains the necessary officer discretion.

Failure to stop

46. In your view, should drivers receive 5 to 10 penalty points if they fail to stop for police?

- Yes
- No (Go to 'Failure to stop reasoning')
- Don't know (Go to 'Statutory time limit')

Failure to stop penalty

47. Why did you give this answer?

Failing to stop for police is a serious behaviour that undermines road safety and increases risk. It is frequently linked to wider offending, including impaired driving, lack of insurance or licence, or attempts to evade detection for other criminal activity.

Introducing meaningful penalty_point sanctions would strengthen deterrence, support police effectiveness, and reduce the likelihood of dangerous situations developing. Clear consequences also reinforce the principle that when police instruct a driver to stop, compliance is mandatory for the safety of all road users.

The seriousness of the risk posed by making off from police should put the penalty at the upper end of this scale, if not higher. This should also be in line with the consequences of the crime they have failures to stop for.

48. Why do you think this number of penalty points is appropriate?

Because of the seriousness and associated consequences of failing to stop.

[Now go to 'Statutory time limit']

Failure to stop reasoning

49. Why did you give this answer?



Statutory time limit

50. In your view, in cases where:

	Yes	No	Don't know
death has occurred, should the statutory time limit (STL) for the offence of failing to stop be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
serious injury has occurred, should the STL for the offence of failing to stop be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Serious and lifechanging collisions often require complex investigation, and the current six-month limit can prevent police and prosecutors from fully completing this work. Extending the time limit would support more thorough investigations and ensure serious cases are not closed prematurely due to procedural deadlines.

This approach aligns with broader aims of ensuring accountability and improving outcomes for victims and their families.

Failure to stop and report offences

51. Provide any other evidence or comments about the current penalty framework for failure to stop and report offences.

Comment:

[Attach relevant documents to your response]

Tackling those seeking to evade justice and avoid their financial obligations

Currently it is harder for police to identify who is using a vehicle than it should be because some offenders go to great lengths to hide who owns a vehicle or who was driving – this makes it harder for the police to keep the public safe and pursue offenders.

There is a significant amount of evidence of people disguising a vehicle’s true ownership to avoid compliance with vehicle excise duty requirements and other payment requirements for the use of certain roads. This places additional burden on those law-abiding drivers when revenue shortfall to the treasury due to fraud, has to be made up.

The police currently have the powers to seize a vehicle from those driving whilst uninsured, or not in accordance with their driving licence. The use of this power has to be proportionate and allows police to use their discretion not to seize where they feel that is an appropriate decision based on the merits of each situation.

52. In your view, should we introduce penalty points for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a motor vehicle with no current keeper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
being in charge of a motor vehicle with no current keeper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Accurate keeper information is essential for effective enforcement and for supporting police, local authorities and safety camera partners in identifying high risk vehicles. Strengthening the consequences for failing to update DVLA records could help reduce behaviours that undermine compliance and contribute to wider offending.

53. In your view, should we introduce vehicle seizure for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a motor vehicle with no current keeper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
being in charge of a motor vehicle with no current keeper	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Why did you give this answer?

We recognise that seizing vehicles with no registered keeper details can act as a strong deterrent and help prevent further offending. Allowing officers discretion ensures the measure is used proportionately, while clear cost-recovery processes would be essential to avoid placing unnecessary burdens on police forces. Ensuring vehicles without traceable keepers can be removed promptly supports wider road-safety objectives by closing a key enforcement gap.

54. In your view, should we introduce penalty points for the offence of being in charge of a motor vehicle with:

	Yes	No	Don't know
an incorrect number plate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
an altered number plate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a false number plate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Accurate and compliant number plates are essential for effective enforcement and the safe operation of ANPR systems. Deliberately obscured or falsified plates undermine road safety efforts and prevent the identification of high-risk vehicles. Strengthening the consequences for this behaviour could support police and partners in improving compliance and reducing associated risks.

55. In your view, should we introduce vehicle seizure for the offence of being in charge of a motor vehicle with:

	Yes	No	Don't know
an incorrect number plate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
an altered number plate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
a false number plate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Extending the vehicle tool to offences involving incorrect or fraudulent number plates is logical and proportionate. Incorrect or altered number plate indicates deliberate non-compliance or an attempt to avoid traceability.

It supports broader road safety and crime-prevention objectives by removing unidentifiable vehicles from the network.

While RSGB endorses the introduction of seizure powers for incorrect or falsified number plates, we strongly support the continued use of police discretion in determining when seizure is appropriate.

56. In your view, should we introduce penalty points for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a vehicle with no current MOT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
using a vehicle with no current MOT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Why did you give this answer?

Road Safety GB notes that decisions on penalty points for MOT non-compliance fall outside our professional scope, and we defer to the appropriate authorities on enforcement and legislative matters.

However, maintaining a valid MOT is a basic but essential safeguard for vehicle safety, helping ensure critical components such as brakes, tyres and lights meet minimum standards. Persistent MOT non-compliance remains common, and clearer consequences could help improve compliance and reduce the number of unsafe vehicles on the road.

Alongside any enforcement measures, ongoing public education remains vital so drivers understand the safety purpose of the MOT, not just its administrative requirements.

Also, in the interests of proportionality, it should be made clear that it relates to “*knowingly* drive a vehicle with no MOT”

57. In your view, should we introduce vehicle seizure for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a vehicle with no current MOT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
using a vehicle with no current MOT	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Current legislation rightly allows motorists to drive a vehicle without a valid MOT for the specific purpose of travelling to a pre-booked MOT test or to a garage for repairs prior to retesting. Introducing seizure powers risks undermining this lawful exemption and may lead to disputes at the roadside where a driver cannot immediately evidence a booking.

Furthermore, seizing a vehicle because of an administrative MOT lapse creates an unnecessary barrier to bringing the vehicle back into compliance. This is especially concerning where the registered keeper was not the driver at the time of the stop and would then face delays, costs, and additional obstacles to arranging the required MOT.

58. In your view, should we introduce penalty points for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a vehicle with no current vehicle excise duty (vehicle tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
using a vehicle with no current vehicle excise duty (vehicle tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Road Safety GB notes that decisions on penalty points for noncompliance of vehicle tax fall outside our professional scope, and we defer to the appropriate authorities on enforcement and legislative matters.

Although not having VED often coincides with other safety related offences, it is not in of itself a safety related matter that RSGB has a view on.

59. In your view, should we introduce vehicle seizure for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
driving a vehicle with no current vehicle excise duty (vehicle tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
using a vehicle with no current vehicle excise duty (vehicle tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Road Safety GB notes that decisions on vehicle-seizure powers for non-compliance of vehicle tax fall outside our professional scope, and we defer to the appropriate enforcement bodies on how such measures should operate.

Non-compliance of vehicle tax often coincides with other safety related offences, it is not in of itself a safety related matter that RSGB has a view on.

60. In your view, should we introduce penalty points for the offence of false declaration in order to obtain motor vehicle insurance?

Yes

No

Don't know (Go to 'False declaration disqualification')

False declaration reasoning

61. Why did you give this answer?

Misrepresenting the main driver on an insurance policy is a deliberate form of non-compliance that undermines road safety and can leave young and inexperienced drivers unprotected. Strengthening consequences, such as introducing penalty points, could provide a clearer deterrent and reinforce the importance of accurate insurance information.

False declaration disqualification

62. In your view, should we introduce driving disqualification for the offence of false declaration in order to obtain motor vehicle insurance?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know (Go to 'Electronic contact')

False declaration disqualification reasoning

63. Why did you give this answer?

Intentionally misleading insurers is a serious behaviour that undermines the integrity of the licensing and insurance system and can put other road users at risk. While the onus must be on prosecutors to prove deliberate dishonesty, disqualification can provide a strong and proportionate response, reinforcing the fundamental requirement for insurance.

Electronic contact

64. In your view, should we consider allowing:

	Yes	No	Don't know
suspects to be contacted via electronic means of communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
witnesses to be contacted via electronic means of communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Why did you give this answer?

Electronic communication can significantly speed up routine processes, such as issuing notices, reminders, and updates. Compared with postal delivery, digital communication is faster, more reliable, and reduces administrative delays.

Digital communication methods also have clear operational and financial benefits. Reducing reliance on physical mail and manual administrative tasks enables police forces to save costs and release staff time. These efficiencies can be reinvested in frontline enforcement capacity, thereby improving road safety and enabling more proactive policing.

Many suspects and witnesses, particularly younger people, are more responsive to electronic communication than to traditional letters. Digital messages can be accessed quickly, stored easily, and retrieved at any time. This can help reduce missed appointments or failures to attend, and support clearer, more consistent communication.

We recognise the need for appropriate safeguards. Electronic communication carries risks such as messages being overlooked or misdelivered. To mitigate these challenges, it is essential that robust systems for confirming message delivery and updating contact information are in place.

We therefore support a multi-channel approach, where email and SMS are used alongside each other, and where digital communication is supported, not replaced, by alternative contact methods where necessary. This ensures that messages are not lost and that no individual is disadvantaged.

Clear guidance will be needed to ensure that electronic communication meets evidential standards, particularly where proof of service is required. Establishing consistent national protocols will help maintain public confidence and ensure fairness for suspects and witnesses throughout the process.



For offences detected by speed or red-light cameras, the law gives a 6-month statutory time limit (STL). This means the case must be brought before a magistrates' court within 6 months of the offence and there will be clear digital or photographic evidence of the offence. This STL period includes the registered keeper providing details to the authorities of who the driver was at the time.

We believe that this is open to abuse and delaying tactics and can result in offenders avoiding justice. We are proposing that this should be changed, so that the "clock" starts when the details of the driver are provided to the authorities.

65. In your view, should the STL be changed to one of 6 months from when the details of the driver are provided to the authorities?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know (Go to 'STL for death and serious injury')

STL reasoning

66. Why did you give this answer?

Extending the time limit would support more thorough investigations and ensure serious cases are not closed prematurely due to procedural deadlines.

This approach aligns with broader aims of ensuring accountability and improving outcomes for victims and their families.

STL for death and serious injury

67. In your view, in cases where:

	Yes	No	Don't know
death has occurred, should the STL for the offence of driving unlicensed be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
serious injury has occurred, should the STL for the offence of driving unlicensed be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
death has occurred, should the STL for the offence of driving uninsured be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
serious injury has occurred, should the STL for the offence of driving uninsured be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
death has occurred, should the STL for the offence of driving disqualified be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Yes	No	Don't know
serious injury has occurred, should the STL for the offence of driving disqualified be extended to 18 months from the current 6 months	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer?

Serious and lifechanging collisions often require complex investigation, and the current six-month limit can prevent police and prosecutors from fully completing this work. Extending the time limit would support more thorough investigations and ensure serious cases are not closed prematurely due to procedural deadlines.

This approach aligns with broader aims of ensuring accountability and improving outcomes for victims and their families.

68. In your view, should the maximum penalties be increased for the offence of:

	Yes	No	Don't know
unlicensed driving	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
driving not in accordance with a licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Why did you give this answer and, if relevant, if this is an appropriate sentence?

The current sentencing framework already provides for very substantial maximum penalties, including an unlimited fine and disqualification in relevant circumstances.

In addition, the offence carries a minimum penalty of a £300 fine and six penalty points. This minimum threshold already ensures a meaningful consequence in all cases.

In our view, the central issue is not the adequacy of the maximum penalties but rather that these maximum powers are not routinely deployed by magistrates, even in serious or aggravating circumstances. Increasing the statutory

maximum would not address this underlying problem and risks creating the appearance of greater severity without practical effect.

A more effective approach would be to ensure consistent and appropriate use of the penalties already available. This could be supported through enhanced training and guidance for magistrates, particularly around the seriousness of unlicensed or otherwise unlawful driving, or reviewing the minimum penalties, should stronger deterrence be required as a baseline rather than at the upper end of the sentencing range.

For these reasons, we do not believe that increasing the maximum penalties would, by itself, lead to improved compliance or enforcement outcomes. Instead, improving the consistency and confidence with which existing sentencing powers are applied would be a more proportionate and effective response.

69. In your view, should the minimum penalties for the offence of driving uninsured be increased?

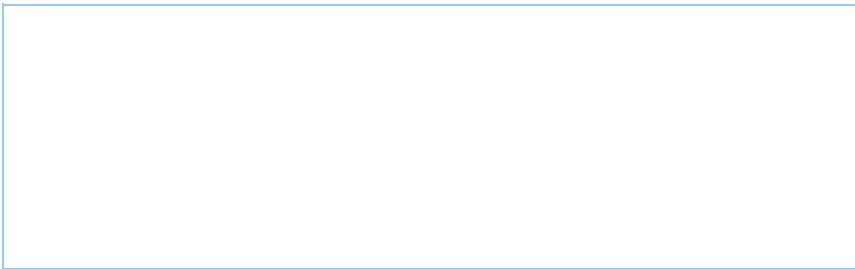
- Yes
- No (Go to 'Disagree offence of driving uninsured should be increased reasoning')
- Don't know (Go to 'Evidence')

Agree offence of driving uninsured should be increased reasoning

70. Why did you give this answer?

Uninsured driving creates significant risk and places an unfair financial burden on compliant road users. Strengthening penalties could help deter persistent offenders and support wider efforts to improve road-user responsibility. Any increase in penalty points should be matched by appropriate fines to ensure the overall sanction remains an effective deterrent for all drivers, not just new or young licence holders.

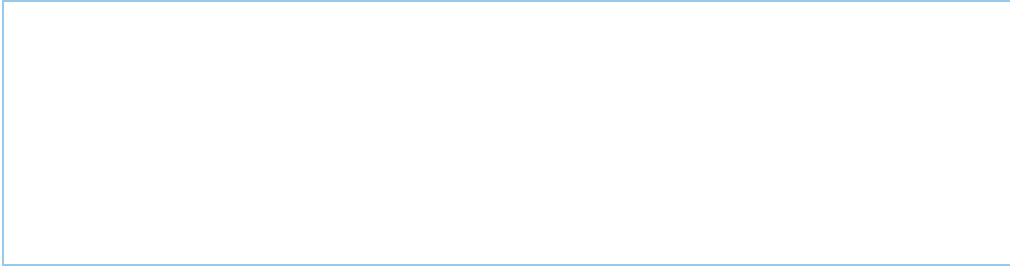
71. What do think is an appropriate sentence?



[Now go to 'Evidence']

Disagree offence of driving uninsured should be increased reasoning

72. Why did you give this answer?



Evidence

73. Provide any other evidence or comments about the proposed introduction of new penalties for certain motoring offences and other road traffic matters set out in this consultation?

Comment:

[Attach relevant documents to your response]

74. Provide any other evidence or comments to make about other areas of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

Comment:

[Attach relevant documents to your response]

Final comments

75. Any other comments?