

# Penalties for motoring offences – a guide to responding to the UK Government consultation

As part of the Road Safety Strategy published in January, the Department for Transport is consulting on proposed changes to penalties for motoring offences. The consultation closes on **11 May 2026**.

[Consultation page with more information about the proposals](#)

## Why this is important

These proposals include some changes that Cycling UK and other road safety organisations have called for over many years, including:

- Increasing the use of driving bans
- Greater penalties for hit and run offences
- Lowering the drink driving limit

Public support for these measures in this consultation will help make our roads safer and protect people cycling.

Most of the proposed changes would apply across Great Britain. Some only apply in England and Wales, as specified in the questions.

## How to respond

There are several ways you can respond:

- Use the [online consultation survey](#)
- Complete a [response form](#) and send it by email or post using the [contact details on the page](#)

The consultation is wide-ranging and contains a lot of questions. You don't need to answer all of them, you can skip through to the questions you want to answer.

To help you respond, we have picked out the questions we think are most relevant to keeping cyclists safe and provided suggested answers.

You can of course answer other questions if you wish, or add to or amend our suggested responses.

If it's easier to copy the text, you can also [download this guide as a Word document](#) rather than a PDF.

## Suggested answers to questions

As you go through the online survey, the question numbers change depending on how you answer.

We have used the same question numbers as on the [paper response form](#), which might be different to the numbers you see.

### Drink and drug driving questions

**5: In your view, should the legal alcohol limit for drink and drive offences in England and Wales be lowered or stay the same?**

be lowered

**6: What legal limit do you think is appropriate?**

50mg in 100ml blood

**7: Why do you think this legal limit is appropriate?**

To improve safety of other road users – especially pedestrians and cyclists. This limit would bring England and Wales in line with Scotland, Northern Ireland and most other European nations.

**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

**10: What legal alcohol limit do you think is appropriate for novice drivers?**

20mg in 100ml blood

**11: Why do you think this legal alcohol limit is appropriate?**

Alcohol is more likely to impair the driving of novice drivers who have less skill and experience at driving. This limit would align with changes that are being introduced in Northern Ireland.

**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

**14: Why did you give this answer?**

The criteria for being a high risk offender should remain as driving with at least 2.5 times the current legal alcohol limit. Therefore, the actual limits should be reduced to match this.

**15: In your view, should a person suspected of committing a:  
drink offence:**

- have their driving licence suspended until attendance at court

**drug offence:**

- have their driving licence suspended until attendance at court

**15a: Why did you give this answer?**

Data in the consultation document shows that 96% of people breathalysed or drug tested by police go on to be convicted. This change would prevent people from getting back in a car before appearing in court and potentially causing danger again. This penalty would be a greater deterrence to drink or drug driving.

**16: In your view, should a person who is under investigation for a serious driving offence that leads to a fatality or serious injury have their driving licence suspended?**

Yes to both

**16a: Why did you give this answer?**

Someone arrested on suspicion of a firearms offence would automatically have any firearms licence suspended. We treat a licence to drive differently than other licences. Suspending licences would be in accordance with a 'public safety first' approach.

*[Skip to the following questions]*

**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

**21: Why did you give this answer?**

People arrested on suspicion of committing other crimes routinely have items seized which they are suspected of using when the crime took place. Road traffic offences and specifically motor vehicles are the exception. Seizure would protect the public pending determination of court proceedings and act as a powerful deterrent.

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

Yes

**23: Why did you give this answer?**

Alcolocks would prevent people from reoffending and putting the public at risk. It would be a further deterrent to drink driving.

*[Skip to the following questions]*

### **Failure to stop and report questions**

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

Yes

**42: Why did you give this answer?**

An amendment to the law is needed to increase the deterrence against failing to stop or report a collision. Currently the same low penalty applies for driving off after denting a car in a car park and a hit and run which leaves someone dead at the roadside.

**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 death / serious injury but failed to stop at the scene and report the collision?**

Yes to both

**43a: Why did you give this answer?**

An amendment to the law is needed to increase the deterrence against failing to stop or report a collision. Currently the same low penalty applies for driving off after denting a car in a car park and a hit and run which leaves someone dead at the roadside.

*[Skip to the following questions]*

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

Yes

**47: Why did you give this answer?**

Having a 'fine only' sanction creates an incentive for people to try and avoid detection. Penalty points for failing to stop for the police would remove that.

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

The penalty points need to be at least as high as for careless driving, otherwise there is an incentive for a careless driver not to stop for the police.

*[Skip to the following questions]*

**Evidence and additional comments**

**74: If you have any other evidence to provide or comments to make about other areas of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988, provide them.**

<https://www.cyclinguk.org/article/why-should-more-drivers-who-cause-danger-be-banned>

I agree with Cycling UK's position that more use should be made of driving bans to penalise drivers who have caused serious danger. These substantial driving bans should be for those who have caused harm but do not need to be locked up for the public's protection.

In addition to the driving ban, disqualified drivers, those who have accumulated 12 points, and/or those who have committed a serious offence should take a compulsory extended re-test linked to remedial training. Cycle awareness and cycle training needs to be included in remedial training courses for people who have committed driving offences, and in the re-testing of disqualified drivers, particularly where a cyclist is the victim.

The definition of 'exceptional hardship' should be revised to prevent the routine use of this defence by drivers seeking to avoid driving bans. Too often offenders escape a driving ban by claiming that such a sanction would put them under 'exceptional hardship'.