I’m afraid it comes to all of us at some time – I am now an older driver. Although I have years of experience and feel completely confident at the wheel, my sight, hearing, reaction-time and judgement of speed and distance aren’t as sharp as they once were.

PETER ANDREWS

This booklet is here to assist you, or the older person in your life, to stay mobile and safe for as long as possible and to provide information on deciding whether driving is still the safest choice.
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The Safer Essex Roads Partnership


Our Aim

We share an ambitious vision to reduce death and serious injury on Essex roads to zero recognising that each road user also has a part to play - we cannot achieve this alone.

We promote road safety and casualty reduction through a number of activities, interventions, programmes and products. These involve a combination of education, engagement, engineering and enforcement, more details of which can be found on our website at: www.saferessexroads.org

We base our activities on casualty data to ensure that we target the right road user groups in the right way at the right time.
Mature Drivers

Deaths and serious injuries among older road users are increasing. There are difficult issues to tackle in helping people understand whether they should consider alternatives to driving especially when for some, it may mean less independence. Our aim is to keep them driving safely for as long as possible but also to be aware of the alternatives and to recognise that, whilst hanging up the car keys can be a major milestone in an older person’s life, it does not signal the end of a busy and fulfilling one.

For more information and advice, please visit the Older Drivers’ Forum website at www.olderdriversforum.com

Older drivers’ assessment

Is your car still suitable for you? Having a driving assessment in your own car may highlight that your car is not necessarily the most suitable car for you and your driving needs. Your assessor will not be looking to stop you driving but will be able to give you advice about making driving easier and safer. For example, they may teach you how to reverse using only your mirrors or may tell you about using a steering ball to make steering easier. Many local driving schools offer assessments for older drivers; as does The Institute of Advanced Motorists (IAM).

Local Contacts for IAM:

Chelmsford Advanced Motorists on Tel: 07757 399897 or visit www.iamchelmsford.org.uk

South Essex Advanced Motorists on Tel: 01702 546839 or visit www.iamroadsmart.com
Reaching the Decision

Reaching the decision to give up driving is not easy because your own car does provide independence and mobility, however, this must be balanced against the risk to yourself and other road users if you continue to drive when it is no longer safe.

It might be possible to have ‘access to a car’ via friends and family.

You must stop driving if the DVLA has told you to stop.

You must also stop driving if your doctor has advised you to stop. Your doctor will have thought long and hard before doing this, and will only advise you to stop driving if they are certain that it is no longer safe for you to drive.

If you have not been told to stop driving, but you, or a family member or friend, are concerned about your driving and think that it may be time for you to stop or at least have a driving assessment, discuss this with your doctor.

The Self-Assessment checklist may help you to decide whether it is time to think about retiring from driving. As a general guide it may be time to give up driving if any of the following conditions apply:

- You feel less confident, and worry more about driving than you used to
- You get lost on roads that you know well
- Your reactions are noticeably slower than they used to be
- You find it difficult to judge speed and distance
- You have had a number of near misses lately
- Your passengers are concerned about your driving
- Your eyesight is getting worse
- Your neck mobility is poor when turning your head
- Your vision is blurry when driving at night
- You have a medical condition that might affect your driving such as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eyesight *</th>
<th>Heart Disease</th>
<th>Dementia</th>
<th>Medications</th>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>Stroke</td>
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<td>Epilepsy</td>
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<td>Sleep Disorders</td>
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See Common Conditions for more advice on the Older Driver Website at www.olderdriversforum.com

* If you’re 60 or over, you can have a free NHS eye test every two years. You can have a free test every year if you’re 70 or over. Many opticians have special offers and discounts for over 60s.
Alternative transport options

There are many options for getting out and about without a car to enable you to maintain contact with friends and family and to do all the things you normally do in your daily life.

Taxis

Set up an account with a reputable taxi or private hire car company to ensure that you get a familiar driver whom you trust. If you attend a regular appointment it’s a good idea to book the taxi or minicab in advance.

If you use a taxi company regularly ask if they will give you a discount.

Walk or Cycle

This is a good option for shorter journeys if you are fit enough.

Cycling is a great way to get around. There are many training courses available through Bikeability - saferessexroads.org/road-users/cycling and Cycle Southend - www.cyclesouthend.co.uk Cycling whether for leisure or transport improves fitness and wellbeing, for added safety we would recommend you wear a cycle helmet.

Please contact the following for further information:

Southend - 01702 215003 (ext 5338)
Essex - 0345 6037631
Local Buses

You can obtain details of routes, timetables and fares for buses and coaches in your area from your local council. Bus services provide access to local areas and across the county, with a number of routes covering the City of Chelmsford and local towns including Colchester, Basildon, Southend-on-Sea, Harwich, Pitsea, Clacton, Saffron Walden, Stansted Airport, Billericay and Brentwood.

They will also be able to tell you about concessionary fares and free passes, such as an Older Persons Bus Pass, a Disabled Persons Bus Pass or a Companion Pass (for people who accompany a disabled person). Check the rules on when you can use concessionary fares - what time they start and stop operating.

You can save money on fares by booking in advance.

Details of local Essex bus services and timetables can be found at www.essexhighways.org/Transport-and-Roads/Getting-Around/Bus.aspx – 03456 037 631

Thurrock visit www.thurrock.gov.uk/public-transport – 01375 413886

Southend visit www.ideasinmotionsouthend.co.uk – 01702 215003

National Buses and Coaches

You can obtain details of routes, timetables and fares, and book tickets, for longer journeys on buses and coaches from companies, such as National Express. (0871 781 8181 or www.nationalexpress.com) They can also tell you about any Coach Card schemes they operate that provide discounts on fares.

Megabus is a budget inter-city coach operator in the UK, details can be found on line at: www.megabus.com or call 0141 352 4444.
Trains

The Essex rail network is extremely accessible and is a great way to travel across the county. Essex, Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea are served by the C2C Rail and Abellio Rail service networks. You can apply for a Senior Citizens' Railcard which will entitle you to 1/3 off discount from your total rail fare on all National Rail services across the country. To apply for a Senior Citizens' Railcard please contact National Rail Enquiries on 0345 748 4950 or visit their website: www.nationalrail.co.uk

You can obtain details of routes, timetables and fares, and book tickets for train journeys from the train companies or from a national website such as National Rail Enquiries or Trainline.

For all national rail enquires please call Trainline on 0333 202 2222 / 0871 244 1545 or visit www.thetrainline.com

Underground (Tube)

The London Underground extends into parts of Essex via the Central Line. There are services from various stations in central London including Marble Arch, Bond Street, Oxford Circus, Holborn, Bank and Liverpool Street to stations in Essex including Chigwell, Loughton and Epping. For more information please call London Underground – 0343 222 1234
Community Transport

The Passenger Transport Team at your local Council will be able to advise you about the services that are available within your area.

Essex County, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock councils provide community transport services that include schemes with regular timed routes and schemes where you can book pick-up and drop off places and times in advance, such as dial a ride and hospital transport services.

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<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Service Delivery Organisation</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tr>
<td>Basildon</td>
<td>Basildon Community Transport</td>
<td>01268 465858</td>
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<td>Braintree</td>
<td>Braintree District Community Transport</td>
<td>01376 557883</td>
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<td>Brentwood</td>
<td>Brentwood Community Transport</td>
<td>01277 228080</td>
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<td>Castle Point</td>
<td>Wyvern Community Transport</td>
<td>01268 754936</td>
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<td>Chelmsford</td>
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<td>01245 477789</td>
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<td>Colchester</td>
<td>Colchester CVS</td>
<td>01206 216600</td>
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<td>Epping Forest</td>
<td>Epping Forest Community Transport</td>
<td>01992 579556</td>
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<td>Harlow</td>
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<td>01279 446855</td>
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<td>Harwich</td>
<td>Harwich Connexions</td>
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<td>Maldon</td>
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<td>Rochford</td>
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<td>Southend-on-Sea</td>
<td>Southend Dial-a-Ride</td>
<td>01702 212212</td>
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<td>Tendring</td>
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<td>01255 436962</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uttlesford</td>
<td>Uttlesford Community Travel</td>
<td>01371 875787</td>
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Mobility Scooters and Shopmobility

Mobility scooters are a good option provided you can use them safely. Ask your local council if there are any schemes in your area to provide advice and training for mobility scooter users.

You can Tel: 0300 456 4566. 8am-7pm Monday to Friday, 9am-1pm Saturday

Write to: Motability Operations
City Gate House
22 Southwark Bridge Road
London SE1 9HB

Visit www.motabilityoperations.co.uk

Or submit your enquiry through a General enquiry form on the website.

Advice about mobility scooters is also available from the Motability Scheme.

If you receive certain mobility allowances or supplements, they can also advise you whether you are eligible to lease one at an affordable price.

Shopmobility schemes help people who have mobility difficulties to shop or get out and about in their local area by lending them mobility equipment, such as a mobility scooter.

You do not have to be registered as disabled, have a blue badge, or be receiving disability benefits to use a Shopmobility service.

Further Information on local schemes is available from your local council or online at www.shopmobility.org.uk and the National Federation of Shopmobility at:

The National Federation of Shopmobility
2-4 Meadow Close Ise Valley Industrial Estate
Wellingborough NN8 4BH

Tel: 01933 229644 or visit shopmobility@bhta.com

Or call Shopmobility Chelmsford (Meadows) 01245 357097, Brentwood 01277 219987 or Southend 01702 875815.
Family members or friends may be able to offer you lifts. There’s no need to feel that you are imposing by asking for a lift as they will usually be happy to help. And remember, you may be able to do them a favour in return at some point.

If you have severe mobility problems, a family member or friend who gives you lifts may be able to apply for the Blue Badge scheme, either on line or by telephone 0808 800 3333. This provides exemptions from some parking restrictions and access to designated parking spaces. It operates differently in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland and is managed by local councils. For further information visit www.scope.org.uk

Internet

The internet can be very useful in all sorts of ways for people who don’t use a car.

It is very easy to order goods, including your weekly food shop, to be delivered to your home.

You can also maintain contact with family and friends through email and social media, such as Facebook, Twitter and other channels.

You can use Skype (which is free to download) on your computer, tablet or mobile phone to stay in touch with family or friends. Once you have downloaded it to your computer, you can make free calls.

It also has an option to use video so you can see the person you are talking to if you both have a webcam. You can use Skype to make cheap calls to mobile and landline telephones if you don’t have a computer but the other person does.

However, social interaction is very important and the internet should not be seen as a substitute for ‘getting out’.
Public Transport Safety Tips

Most journeys on public transport go ahead without a hitch, however, in order to minimise the chances of any incidents, passengers may wish to consider the following safety tips:

- Do not leave your bags and belongings unattended at any time.
- Stay alert and aware of your environment and those around you.
- Do not show valuables including money and jewellery in public.
- If you are carrying a bag/handbag, ensure you use a bag that has a strong good quality strap and wear it across your shoulder (not on your shoulder), with the pockets closed facing towards your waist. Carrying the bag on your shoulder makes it much easier for criminals to snatch the bag or cut the strap.
- Be careful and cautious in crowds and beware of pickpockets, do not leave anything valuable showing in public including wallets in back trouser pockets.
- Try to sit in carriages with other passengers
- Try not to use smaller/isolated stations especially at night.
- When waiting for buses, trains, boats and taxis stand with other passengers in an area that is well lit, do not stand/wait in isolated areas.