

# Out and **about** again following lockdown

## *Your guide to a safe return to driving*



**Returning to driving following lockdown will bring you an important sense of independence, mobility and freedom, and will allow a return to the activities that are important to you.**

**However, you must ensure you return to driving in confidence and safety.**

**We hope the following information is helpful to you in achieving a safe return to driving.**

## **About** you

The most important aspect of your road safety is you, the driver. You must consider any change of health or medication that you have experienced since you last drove.

You must ensure that any recent change of medication has not affected your ability to drive safely – if you are unsure you should check with your General Practitioner before attempting a return to driving.

You must be sure that your eyesight still meets the required standards before you attempt a return to driving. To return to driving you must be able to read a vehicle registration number in good daylight at a distance of 20 metres, with the use of distance vision glasses or contact lenses if required. If you have any concerns regarding your vision, you should arrange an appointment at your local opticians before attempting to drive.

You must also be sure that the vehicle controls you use are still easily and safely operated. If you have any concerns about your ability to operate your current vehicle controls you can gain advice regarding alternative vehicle control options from your local accredited Driving Assessment Centre at:

Driving Mobility - **0800 559 3636** or **[www.drivingmobility.org.uk](http://www.drivingmobility.org.uk)**

## **About** your car

Before using your car again you must make sure that it is in a roadworthy condition.

To ensure safety and reliability you should refer to your vehicle handbook and check all under bonnet levels including oil, water coolant, washer bottle fluid etc. You should visually check the condition of your tyres to ensure there is sufficient tread depth and that all tyres remain inflated at the correct pressures (including the spare wheel if supplied with your vehicle). Check the operation of all lights and indicators and that the wiper blades remain in good condition. Treat your car to a wash so you have clear vision through all mirrors and windows.

If you have any concerns regarding the roadworthiness of your vehicle have it inspected by a qualified vehicle mechanic prior to returning to driving.

## **About** the law

Before you return to driving ensure your vehicle remains taxed, has a valid MOT certificate (if required) and that you are still insured to drive the vehicle. You can check the MOT and road tax status of your vehicle at:

<https://vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk>

You must also ensure your driving licence remains valid - the expiry date of your driving licence is shown on the front of your photo card driving licence at point 4b.

## **About** the regulations

It is important to keep up to date with changes in road traffic law and regulations. Before you return to driving take a look at the current highway code to make sure you are fully prepared for driving in all traffic conditions. You can purchase an up to date copy of the highway code or visit:

[www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-road-safety](http://www.gov.uk/browse/driving/highway-code-road-safety)

Consider taking some refresher driver training to build your confidence and to ensure you are familiar with up to date road procedures before driving independently again.

You can contact your local Approved Driving Instructor or find specialist driver training services at:

[www.drivingmobility.org.uk](http://www.drivingmobility.org.uk) or [www.disabilitydrivinginstructors.com](http://www.disabilitydrivinginstructors.com)

## **About** your wheelchair

If you rely on a wheelchair for your mobility when away from the vehicle do ensure the wheelchair can be reliably used. Check that your wheelchair has been serviced in accordance with manufactures guidelines and that the batteries are fully charged (if fitted) and the brakes are working well.

If you remain seated in your powered wheelchair when driving you should check that the tyres are at the correct pressures (if inflatable tyres are fitted) to ensure stability when the wheelchair locks into your vehicle. Also ensure the foot plates, arm rests and back rest are securely attached to the wheelchair before using it within your vehicle.

## **About** your journeys

Plan your journeys before setting off and do ensure you have sufficient fuel for the journey and that your mobile phone is charged. Consider initially taking short local journeys, with a member of your household, in familiar surroundings.....

As you drive, be vigilant for other drivers who might also be returning to driving following lockdown, and allow for their errors.

Most of all, enjoy your return to driving and ensure you remain safe when you are out and about.

