



18th May 2020

Most people's driving experience has been quite different over the last few weeks.

Not commuting for work has almost eliminated motorway driving from my routine, as I'm using familiar local A and B-class roads for my essential journeys. I use my knowledge of the local area to predict where walkers may be crossing and what fields are being ploughed ready for planting.

Yet despite my familiarity I have learnt to expect the unexpected. Depending on the time of day, I'm aware of the likelihood of deer or badgers crossing the road, and adjust my speed accordingly.

Always in the back of my mind is the fact that country roads account for about 60 per cent of all fatalities on Scotland's roads. In 2018, more than 700 people were killed or seriously injured on them – and of these, two thirds were men and nearly 40 per cent were aged between 22-49.

Behind each number, a person, friends, family, and a ripple effect that lasts generations.

The danger of rural roads was highlighted a couple of years ago in a Transport Scotland campaign: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_mrStdgrlo

There are a number of ways of reducing these risks, starting when you get into the car and put on your seatbelt.

Set up your satnav for the journey to avoid distractions, and as you make that journey remember to "read the road": more paint and signs on the road indicates hazards ahead.

During lockdown there has been a trend of increasing speed recorded; a significant factor in crashes, and without stating the obvious, the faster you go the longer it will take you to stop, and the greater the likelihood of death or life-changing injury if you do crash.

Both now and after the pandemic, managing your speed on rural roads is so important for your own safety and that of others.

We have [10 top tips](#) to help

As a road safety community we need to think about the key messages people need to hear as they prepare to return to driving. There are so many simple interventions that can be put into place to reduce the risks posed by rural roads.

As an employer think about your responsibility to manage driving risk as you would any other risk to your organisation and join [ScORSA](#) - it's free and provides routine updates and 1:1 support straight to your in-box

KMcD