

Biker's Guide to North Yorkshire



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Welcome to the seventh edition of the Biker’s Guide to North Yorkshire.

Inside you will find useful information to help you enjoy the roads in this beautiful county, along with some tips on personal safety, from getting your bike ready to reading the road.

It gives you information on:

- Maps and advice on riding stretches of road where bikers regularly come to grief
- Information on bike care and kit
- Riding tips, including group riding
- Information on Bikesafe courses which will improve your skills
- Possible traffic offences
- Crash data

We the police with our partners want you to ride safely having respect for the roads you use and for other road users.

Tragically, over the last ten years there have been 110 Bikers killed and 815 seriously injured on our rural roads. Following crash investigations, the majority of these crashes were associated with errors made by the riders, either with machine control or road craft.

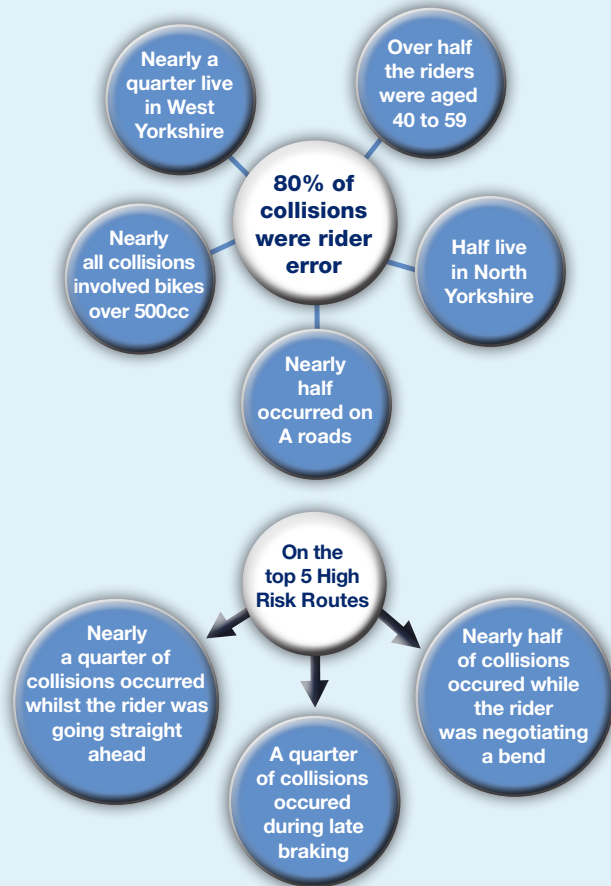
At the end of the day we want you to return home to your family safely ready for the next ride out.

Traffic Sergeant ►
Sean Grey



Motorcycle Crashes in North Yorkshire

From 2006 to 2015, 110 motorcyclists were killed on rural North Yorkshire roads and 815 were seriously injured.



‘BikeSafe’ is a nationwide police-led motorcyclist casualty reduction initiative that is run by the majority of forces throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Large numbers of riders attend ‘BikeSafe’ sessions annually. ‘BikeSafe’ works toward Government casualty reduction targets in an effort to reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured in road collisions.

‘BikeSafe’ strategy is to engage with post-test riders in a conflict free environment to consider and analyse why motorcycle crashes are happening, including the attitudinal and motivational issues. There are fewer causes than you might imagine with five strong themes emerging throughout the country. Filtering, junctions,

cornering, overtaking and group riding are the problem areas. Really obvious things seem to be placing everyday riders in life threatening scenarios.

In the classroom, ‘BikeSafe’ can offer potential solutions to the most prevalent crash causes and thereafter, following an observed ride element, prepare an individual rider development report which can be taken to a post-test training provider. ‘BikeSafe’ is about ‘Bridging the Gap’ into accredited training.

Courses are normally two modules, a classroom theory session followed by a two hour observation ride, after which you will be given a written assessment of your riding and areas for improvement.



To book a course in North Yorkshire go to www.bikesafe.co.uk/Booking or email info@bikesafeadmin.co.uk

Bike care



Tyres

Make sure your tyre pressures are correct and adjust them if you carry a passenger or extra luggage. Check you have enough tread and remove any grit.

Chain

Check the tension is correct. Oil the chain regularly and check the sprockets for uneven wear.

Brakes

Never let your pads wear down to the minimum specified by the manufacturer – this will often be indicated by a colour marker on the pads. Neglected pads can result in life threatening damage to brake discs.

Looking after your bike and carrying out these simple checks before each ride could save your life.

Suspension

Make sure you have set the suspension correctly for the type of riding you are doing. Getting it wrong can be dangerous as well as uncomfortable.

Lubrication

Check your oil levels including the hydraulics. Grease or oil all moving parts of the bike.

Servicing

Make sure you follow the recommended maintenance schedule. Getting the brake fluid changed regularly is particularly important.

Overtaking and filtering

Over the last few years there has been a significant increase in motorcyclists colliding with other vehicles during or after an overtaking manoeuvre. In many of these situations, riders collided with an oncoming vehicle or lost control and left the road.

Please remember, overtaking not only requires the skill to judge speed and distance, but a good knowledge of your bike's acceleration. With a bike you are not used to riding, take time to learn how it reacts to acceleration and braking in different gears, before doing any overtaking.

Don't overtake when approaching:

- bends
- junctions
- lay-bys
- pedestrian crossings
- hills or dips in the road
- where there are double white lines or other signs prohibiting overtaking.

There could be a high speed vehicle coming the other way, hidden from view. To overtake safely you need a view of everything going on around you and none of us have x-ray vision. You have no idea how a driver or rider will react when they see you overtaking them. You can't assume they will slow down to let you in. They may do the opposite.

If you are filtering past stationary or slow moving traffic, do it with care. The closely packed vehicles reduce your visibility, manoeuvrability and reaction time to a minimum. A lot of drivers will not know that you are there and may move across in front of you or open a door.

If you are riding with others, plan everything for yourself. Snap overtaking decisions are dangerous.

Helmets



FIT COMFORT SAFETY

When choosing a helmet it is better to choose the helmet that fits you correctly and offers the best protection rather than choosing one for its looks.

The SHARP (Safety Helmet Assessment and Rating Programme) Scheme tests the energy absorption qualities of helmets and produces a five star rating.

Research by the SHARP scheme suggests that in 80% of fatal and 70% of serious collisions, head injuries were a significant factor. In the same study, in 14% of collisions, riders lost their helmets during impact. In order to give you the best protection your helmet needs to be a really good fit.

When you choose a helmet, follow these five tips

1. Get Your Head Measured

Measure around the fullest part of your head just above the ears and choose a helmet in that size range. It may be tempting to buy the model you want in the wrong size but a helmet that is too small will be uncomfortable and a helmet that is too large may come off in a collision.

2. Try It On

Adjust the strap so that you can only fit two fingers between it and your jaw. You should be able to feel the helmet against all parts of your head without any pressure points. If not, the helmet may be the wrong shape for you.

3. Too Tight or Too Loose?

With the strap secured, try rotating the helmet from side to side. On a full face, your cheeks should follow the movement of the helmet and stay in contact with the cheek pads. Next, tilt the helmet forward and back. It should stay in position and not move.

4. Does It Come Off?

With the strap secured. Tilt your head forward and get someone to try to roll the helmet off your head by carefully applying upward force to the rear of the helmet. If it can be rolled off, it's likely that it will come off in a collision.

5. Safety Standards

Ensure your helmet comes with either an 'E' or BSI approval marking.

For more information and to check helmet safety ratings go to www.direct.gov.uk/sharp



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Get ready for the roads

Get the right kit

Always ride with jacket, trousers, gloves and boots which will give you some protection if you come off. Always buy the best you can afford.

Jackets and Trousers

Leather offer the best protection from abrasion and impact but textiles can be more waterproof and practical. Make sure the stitches use Kevlar® and that the jacket is close fitting, with padding around the back, shoulders elbows and wrists.

Trousers should also be close fitting with protection around the knees and thighs. Make sure they are comfortable and don't cut circulation to the lower leg.

Body Armour

Some riders consider body armour uncomfortable but it does provide more impact protection by absorbing and spreading the forces of impact.

Boots and Gloves

It is common for riders to receive ankle breaks and foot crush injuries. Wear above ankle height boots made for motorcycling. Gloves should have extra protection across the palms and knuckles but make sure they are not too tight when gripping the bars, which may limit circulation and ability to operate the bar controls.

Be in the right place at the right time

The middle of the lane is generally the best place to be but be guided by traffic conditions. Choose a position that maximises your view of the road and the amount of time other road users can see you.

When turning, take up your road position early so other road users can see what you are trying to do. Signal your intention at the appropriate time in the manoeuvre.

Read the Road

Become an expert at reading the road and spotting biker hazards. Inspection covers, shiny asphalt, painted lines, mud, leaves are all things you need to avoid if you can.

Always scan the road as far ahead as you can. Look for clues in the distance that tell you what the road is about to do. Signs, lampposts and hedges can help you read the direction of the road. Remember, where you look is where you go.

Ride at a speed that will allow you to slow down and stop within the distance you can see to be clear. This is especially important on roads you know well. The right speed will depend on conditions. Be on the look out for stray animals, cyclists, horse riders and farm vehicles.

Become an expert of manoeuvres

Be on full alert when negotiating bends, junctions, overtaking and crossing junctions.

Take a 'lifesaver' glance over your shoulder before making a move. Make sure you know where other road users are.

Always remember that the best way to negotiate a bend is slow in and smooth out. Wait until you can see the exit before applying power. Don't be pressurised to ride into a bend faster than you are comfortable with.

Practise braking at different speeds. Start slow and build up confidence, so that in a real emergency you can slow down and avoid the hazard.





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Reading the Road

A useful way to help judge your approach speed and speed through corners is to use the 'Vanishing Point'. This is where, as you look into the corner, the two sides of the road (or verges) appear to meet. If you keep looking towards this point you're looking far enough ahead to ride smoothly and see problems early. But if you also notice whether this point is moving towards you or away, you have a crucial indication of what the corner is doing next. If the vanishing point is moving towards you, then the bend is tightening up and you need to roll off the throttle. If it's moving away from you, the bend is opening out.

BUT... Remember that the 'vanishing point' tells you nothing about the potential hazards beyond what you can see. If you read the hedges rather than the kerbs or if the verge changes width or doesn't follow the line of the road, it can lead to you thinking the bend is more open than it is. Corners where the road changes elevation are difficult to read – they can appear more open than they actually are, causing you to run in too fast.

- Ease off the throttle smoothly and get in the right gear early. Aim for a neutral throttle opening through the bend.
- Wait until you see the exit of the bend and can see where the road goes before applying the power.
- We all counter-steer without thinking about it, but some positive forward pressure on the inside bar will force the bike to turn quicker.
- If you lack confidence in cornering, you may turn in early to avoid having to turn hard later on. Turning in early may cause you run wide and veer into the roadside or oncoming traffic. Wait until you can see the exit of the corner before you turn in tighter. Find a speed that doesn't cause panic and practise turning in later.
- On a straight road with no other traffic practise braking with bent arms. In a stressful situation, it is natural to brace yourself for an impact but with bent arms you will have better control, find it easier to change direction and have more feel for the front tyre. Grip the tank with your thighs and try to move your elbows around. If you can't, you are hanging on too tight.
- On a straight road with no other traffic practise braking hard at different speeds. Start slow and build up as you get used to braking hard. This will not only give you confidence when you have to do it for real but will reduce your stopping distance in an emergency.
- Don't be pressurised by your mates, or the rider following you, to rush into a corner faster than you are comfortable with.

Never ride faster than the speed that allows you to stop in the distance you can see to be clear.



Riding in groups

Group riding is a popular pastime, but is not without its risks. A significant number of motorcyclist casualties have occurred when riders are in a group. If you decide to join a group ride, please keep in mind the following points:

Ride to the bike behind you

One of the main factors in crashes while in a group is when riders try to keep up with the bike in front. This can easily be avoided if you ride to the bike behind you rather than the bike in front – keep the bike behind you in your mirrors all the time.

Ride your own ride

If you drop off the group, don't be tempted to ride beyond your abilities. If the rider in front of you is quicker, don't succumb to peer pressure and get out of your depth trying to keep up.

Overtaking

The other main factor in group riding crashes occurs whilst riders are trying to overtake other traffic to keep up with the leader. To reduce the risk, give the rest of the group time to catch up by backing off until followers are also past.

It's tempting to follow the rider in front when they overtake.

Always make your own decision based on the conditions you are experiencing at that time – never rely on the observations or actions of other riders in your group.

Pass other vehicles one at a time, not as a group. Each rider will have better visibility ahead, spend less time on the wrong side of the road and have more time and space to react if something goes wrong.

Plan ahead

Plan regular fuel and food stops at least every 90 minutes. Devise a plan for on-road communications; agree signals for low fuel, road hazards, upcoming turns etc. Never turn off the road unless you are sure the follower has seen you.

Ride in staggered formation when possible

When road width permits, ride on alternate sides of the lane you are travelling in. This not only enhances visibility but also helps to create a safer space around each bike.

Take regular breaks

Group riding can be more stressful and tiring than solo riding. Fatigue has caused many biker crashes, especially on the way home from a group ride. Take regular breaks and reduce your speed when you recognise you are losing concentration.

Map 1: A170

Thirsk to Scarborough



Map 2: A64

Tadcaster to Scarborough

Key

Fatal

Serious accidents

Slight casualties

Safety cameras operate on this route

Road bends

Road narrows

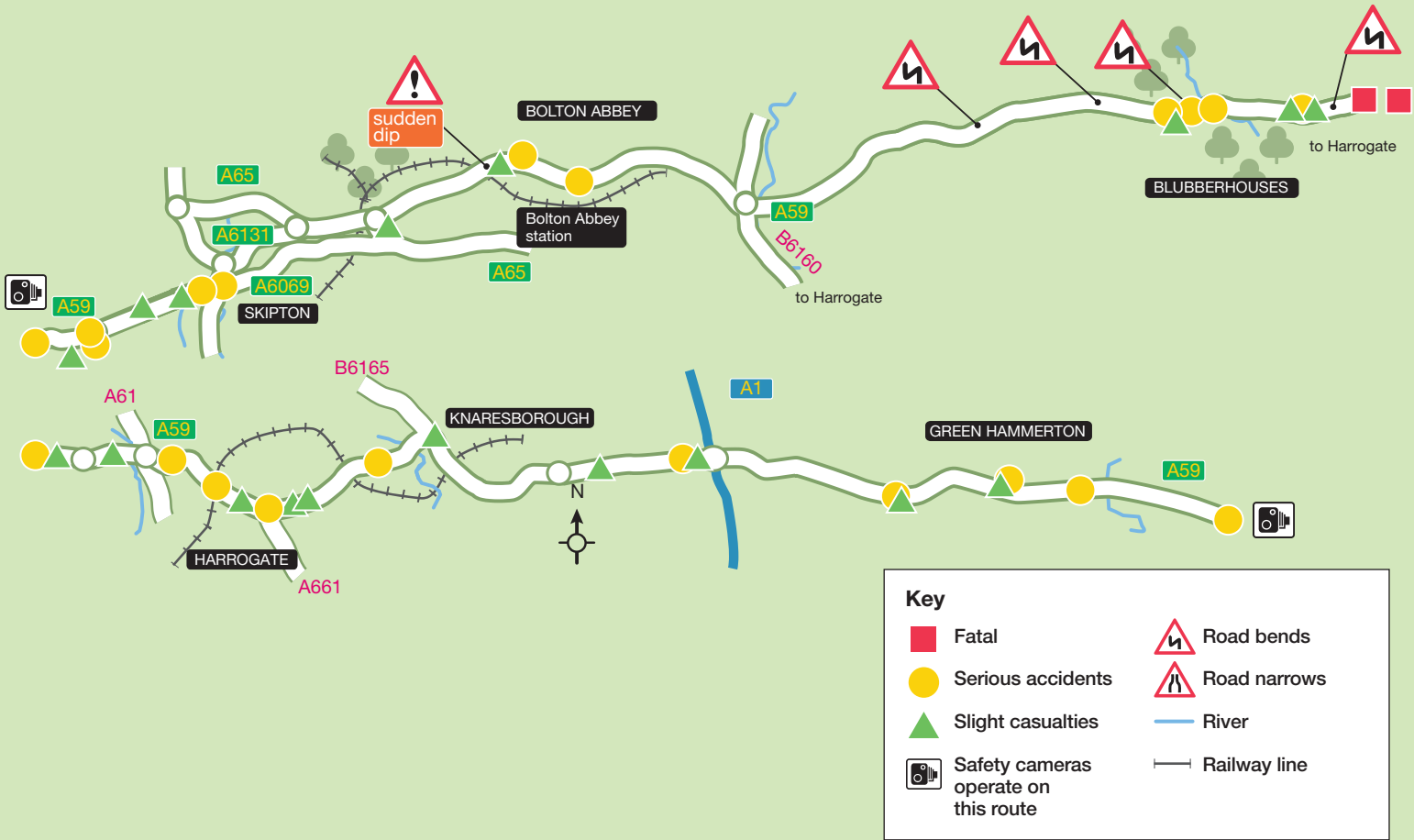
River

Railway line



Map 3: A59

Skipton to Harrogate



Map 4: A65

Ingleton to Skipton





Enhanced Rider Scheme



ERS is designed for fully licensed motorcyclists and it's perfect for those who:

- have just passed their test
- are upgrading to a more powerful bike
- are returning to biking after a break
- simply want a health check on their riding or are thinking of going onto a higher level

ERS is tailored to your needs. You do as little or as much training as required; it concentrates on identifying weaknesses in key risk areas such as bend negotiation, overtaking, filtering, positioning and junctions. The trainer's role is to help you to further develop your riding skill and reduce risks.

- If your riding is assessed as satisfactory, the process ends there and you will be issued an ERS certificate
- If training is needed, a rider development plan is devised that concentrates on the specific areas needing attention.
- Once you've completed your training, you'll receive a report and a DSA Certificate of Competence, which then qualifies you for an insurance discount!

To find out more go to www.direct.gov.uk/ERS

To find your nearest DSA approved instructor, go to www.dft.gov.uk/fyn/enhanced.php

Road traffic offences

We want you to enjoy your riding in North Yorkshire and continue to be a responsible and respectful road user. However, if your riding draws attention from the Police, there are a number of potential offences they may stop you for.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ■ Lights not working | ■ Exhaust not conforming to regulations |
| ■ Speeding | ■ Defective tyres (i.e. tread too low) |
| ■ Crossing double white lines | ■ No helmet |
| ■ Careless riding | ■ Tinted visors |
| ■ Dangerous riding | ■ Contravening road signs |
| ■ Causing death by careless riding | ■ No tax / fail to display tax |
| ■ Causing death by dangerous riding | ■ No MOT |
| ■ Causing death while not insured | ■ No Insurance |
| ■ Registration plate not conforming to regulation. (i.e. wrong size / typing wrong style / no registration mark) | ■ No driving licence / riding with a provisional licence |

The above is not a definitive list of offences and others can be committed. They can be dealt with in a number of ways and each carry their own penalties from vehicle defect rectification notices and fixed penalty notices to reporting for summons with the possibility of imprisonment if convicted. Some offences may also result in your motorcycle being seized by the police.



www.roadwise.co.uk

www.facebook.com/95alive

www.twitter.com/95alive

www.youtube.com/user/northyorksrides

www.youtube.com/user/ninety5alive

