

[News story: Near miss with train driver at Stafford](#)



Still image from forward facing CCTV of the northbound train (image courtesy of Virgin Trains)

At around 14:36 hrs on 2 March 2018, a northbound train travelling at around 85 mph (137 km/h) nearly struck the driver of a stationary southbound train at Stafford station. The driver of the stationary train was between the Up and Down Stafford Fast lines attending to a train brake fault. There were no injuries.

We have undertaken a [preliminary examination](#) into the circumstances surrounding this incident. Having assessed the evidence which has been gathered to date, we have decided to publish a [safety digest](#).

The safety digest will be made available on our website in the next few weeks.

Published 29 March 2018

[Press release: £2m funding for rural communities to restore historic buildings](#)

The [Historic Building Restoration Grant](#) is being piloted in Dartmoor, Lake District, Northumberland, Peak District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks with £2 million of funding available.

The aim of the scheme is to help save the iconic historic farm buildings in the English National Parks from falling out of use. Owners of these buildings from today can apply for a grant offering 80% towards the cost of restoration. This can include replacing the roof, weatherproofing the

exterior, or other restoration works so that the building can be used again for farming purposes.

The scheme is open for applications until 31 January 2019 and, once approved, agreement holders will have two years to complete the works.

The grant is also supported by an implementation plan so that applicants can work with National Park advisors on developing a management plan to deliver the restoration, working with conservation consultants as necessary. This work is 100% funded so applicants can seek the advice they need to develop high quality applications and secure funding for their projects.

Lord Gardiner, Defra Minister for National Parks said:

The British countryside, including those historic farm buildings that dot some of our most iconic landscapes, is a truly precious natural asset. I am delighted that we are able to open this new set of grants supporting the restoration of traditional farm buildings.

Land managers who apply for this scheme will not only be safeguarding our rural history and culture, but also regenerating traditional buildings for use today and for future generations.

Sir Laurie Magnus, Chairman of Historic England said:

Historic England warmly welcomes this scheme and its endorsement of the value and importance of traditional farm buildings. Many farm buildings, in my view, are as important as churches in contributing to the beauty and the character of the English landscape. The partnership approach being piloted by Historic England, Natural England and upland National Parks will be of immense value in helping owners to maintain and conserve these buildings and to retain their significance for future generations.

[News story: Multi-million pound fund for adult learning announced](#)

National Numeracy Nationwide Using online learning to engage working adults in improving their basic maths skills Workers Education Association London Flexible and accessible learning delivered through the innovative use of Behavioural Insight The College of Haringey, Enfield and North East London part of the Capital City College Group London Routes 2 Cyber Security, Digital Skills and Business Transformation for Adult Learners NA College Trust East Midlands Developing online packages for Level 1/2 maths and

English functional skills for engineering, manufacturing and service sector workers Access Skills West Midlands Developing flexible workplace task focused learning for delivery in the Health and Social Care sector Rutland County Council East of England Armed Forces dependants flexible learning project Newham College of Further Education London Local London Flexi-Learn Open University East Midlands Bringing Learning to Life Bristol City Council on behalf of the West of England Community Learning Consortium South West Let's Get Ahead! Flexible learning for inclusive growth National Land Based College West Midlands A flexible approach to the delivery of Level 2 and 3 land based qualifications, to upskill or reskill those already working, or seeking to work in the land based sector Carlisle College North West Cumbria eLearning platform for functional skills St Helens Chamber North West Digital Skills for Returners and low-skilled employees Dudley College of Technology West Midlands Improving Access to skills in the region PeoplePlus Group North West Progression Pathways for Parents Hounslow London Borough Council London West London Blended Learning Project Open Awards North West Blending Access to Higher Education Durham County Council Adult Learning and Skills Service North East Durham Learn Weston College South west Developing online/online blended training packages to bridge the skills gap for the West of England Skills and Learning Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole South west Flex to Learn Middlesbrough College North East Open Access to Health The Consultancy Home Counties Ltd East Midlands Class2Cloud Fareport Training Organisation Ltd South East Health Care Worker. Fast track pre-employability literacy and basic skills programme Edlounge Yorkshire & the Humber The Virtual Education Lounge South Devon College South west Switching Up DBC Training East Midlands Language Labs Nottinghamshire County Council East Midlands Carers into Caring Hull College Group Yorkshire & the Humber Developing an employer supported Level 2 Health and Care professions qualification to improve the skills profile of Health and Care workers through flexible delivery Birmingham Metropolitan College West Midlands Digital Engineering Academy Kensington and Chelsea College London Flexible First Steps to London North Shropshire College West Midlands The Pop-up College London Skills Development Network London Open Access learning hubs (Edugym) and interactive digital learning for adult learners retraining or returning to work London College of Beauty Therapy London Building futures for adults in Beauty, Hair and Retail through flexible learning

Press release: Bikers on bank holiday rides offered myth-busting advice

Over the winter months, thousands of riders declare their motorbikes as SORN (Statutory Off Road Notification) – meaning they can keep their bikes off the road without paying tax.

Recent figures from the DVLA show that of those bikers who only ride part of the year, more than half will take their motorbike out at the start of the

“bank holiday season”.

The Easter weekend marks the time when many bikers choose to put their motorbikes back on the road. So the DVLA is providing the truth behind some of the myths around ‘SORN’ing and taxing a motorbike.

Myth 1: “I can still keep my motorbike on the road after I’ve SORN’d it – I just can’t drive it.”

Whilst your motorbike is declared ‘SORN’ it can’t be kept on a public road – so it must be kept in a garage, on a drive or on private land.

Myth 2: “If I’m only going out on my motorbike once I don’t need to tax it.”

By law, motorbikes must be taxed before they’re ridden or kept on the public road. If not, you risk being caught and fined a lot more than the annual cost of taxing your motorbike.

However, there is one time this isn’t the case.

You can ride a motorbike to a pre-arranged MOT appointment under ‘SORN’ – but you must have motor insurance.

Myth 3: “Using a motorbike while its SORN’d is not a big deal.”

Using any vehicle on the public road while it’s declared SORN is a criminal offence under Section 29 of the Vehicles Excise & Registration Act 1994. The maximum fine is £2,500.

Myth 4: “There’s a lot of admin and cost involved in taxing again after SORN.”

Taxing online can take minutes and you’ll receive instant confirmation that your motorbike is legal to ride on the road. [You can tax online](#) with your log book (V5C) to hand. If you don’t have your V5C, you can go to a post office to apply for one. They can tax for you at the same time.

Myth 5: “I’ve just bought the motorbike so the ‘SORN’ or tax is transferred to me.”

In the same way that tax isn’t transferred when a motorbike is sold, ‘SORN’ is also not transferred to the new keeper. You must tax a vehicle before you put it on the public road. So, if you’re buying a motorbike and want to take it out straight away – remember to tax it. You can do this at the side of the road on your phone – through the website or contact centre – as long as you have the green new keeper’s slip from the V5C.

Myth 6: “I don’t pay for my tax – it’s free, so I don’t need to tax it or ‘SORN’ it.”

Even if your motorbike is ‘nil rate’ and you don’t need to pay anything when you tax it, you still need to renew your vehicle tax each year and will still need to make a ‘SORN’ if you’re not renewing your vehicle tax.

Myth 7: “The motorbike isn’t registered in my name yet. So I can’t tax it or ‘SORN’ it.”

If you’ve just bought the motorbike, you can still do this, as long as you have the green new keeper’s slip from the log book (V5C). If you don’t have any documents, you can apply at a Post Office.

Rohan Gye, Vehicles Service Manager, said,

While there may be a number of myths about SORN the rules are clear and easy to understand – you must tax your motorbike before putting it on the road. If you’ve SORN’d your bike over the winter months the quickest and easiest way to tax is online.

For more information from DVLA on taxing a vehicle and to do it online today visit www.gov.uk/vehicle-tax.

[News story: £800 million agreed for defence](#)

This includes access to £600 million from the Dreadnought contingency, announced in 2015, and will ensure that the UK’s new world-class nuclear submarines are delivered on time and within the £31 billion budget agreed at the [Strategic Defence and Security Review](#) in 2015.

In addition £200 million was agreed at the [Supplementary Estimates](#) earlier in the year.

A Royal Navy submarine has always been on patrol, providing the continuous at sea deterrent for almost 50 years. And the next generation of submarines will ensure this can continue into the future, deterring conflict and protecting the nation 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

This money funds a key government priority that has been the bedrock of defence policy for nearly 50 years.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond, said:

Our commitment to defence and national security is unwavering. The UK’s defence budget is the highest in Europe and the second highest in NATO and ensures Britain can continue to respond effectively to the ever-changing threats we face.

We will continue to invest in our world-class Armed Forces and this

additional investment of £600 million will ensure the UK is protected by the nuclear deterrent provided by the new Dreadnought fleet into the 2030s and beyond.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

This is a welcome boost to our Armed Forces, ensuring we can continue to back-up our national security with the ultimate capability. In a world of intensifying and evolving threats, we must strengthen and maintain our ability to seize opportunities and counter challenges as they emerge. I have launched the Modernising Defence Programme to ensure we have the capabilities we need to keep Britain safe in an increasingly dangerous world.