



March 2009

SAFE RIDER CHOICE

Motorcyclists who break speed limits or commit other endorsable traffic offences in Avon and Somerset are to be offered the chance to attend a special road safety workshop instead of having penalty points on their licence.

Speed Choice courses have been available to speeding motorists for the past six years and more than 120,000 drivers have chosen to attend a workshop to avoid penalty points.

Now, from the beginning of next month, the option is to be extended to motorcyclists who break speed limits, ride through red traffic lights, cross double white lines or commit other traffic offences that would normally result in a licence endorsement.

The workshops for motorcyclists will be held at three centres - Shirehampton, Keynsham and Taunton. They are non-profit making with a £60 charge being made to cover the cost.

The three hour long courses, taken by expert instructors, will emphasise the importance of safe riding behaviour and the responsibility riders have for their own safety and that of their passengers and other road users.

The Rider Choice workshops are being organised by the Safety Camera Partnership – now known as Safecam - in conjunction with Avon and Somerset Constabulary, as part of the education campaign to cut the high number of deaths and injuries among bikers.

During the past five years 80 motorcyclists have been killed and 821 seriously injured on local roads.

Richard Fairhurst, the Speed Choice education development manager, said: "Motorcyclists are an extremely vulnerable group. They represent only one per cent of traffic – but a quarter of all those killed and seriously injured on local roads."

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“Rider error is cited as a factor in the majority of motorcycle collisions. Safe motorcycling begins with good rider attitude backed up by good riding skills,” he said.

“Quite simply, these courses will give motorcyclists constructive advice on how to become better and safer riders.”

“We believe they will help to change rider attitudes and behaviour and bring a lasting reduction in the number of motorcyclists and their passengers being killed and seriously injured on our roads.”

The feedback from those taking the Speed Choice courses for speeding motorists, which were launched in 2003, has been tremendously positive with 98 per cent of attendees grading them as “good” or “excellent”.

A follow-up survey last year showed that most believed their driving had improved as a result of attending the workshop.

The full range of Speed Choice workshops and education programmes can be found on its website www.speedchoice.org.uk

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