



Success for driving scheme that hopes to reduce road accidents

The news has been filled recently with tragic stories of road traffic accidents. Organisations across the county are working on a number of schemes to try and turn this around. Recently, we've supported [Bournemouth Borough Council](#) on a driving scheme, which has now gained national recognition. Our health programme advisor, Jo Tibbles, explains more.



Putting driving skills to the test

By Jo Tibbles

Bournemouth Borough Council had reason to celebrate recently as their Life Drive project was crowned Best New Scheme 2016 at the FirstCar Young Driver Road Safety Awards.

This is because Life Drive, which we have supported with, has successfully worked with 100 people to increase knowledge about driving skills. And we're hoping such a scheme could lead to a fall in road accidents in Bournemouth and, potentially, the rest of Dorset.

Life Drive is a free programme that gives young people aged 17 to 25, who live in Bournemouth and have passed their test, extra theoretical and practical training.

It was set up to build on the skills, confidence and experience of young drivers to try and reduce road collisions, as although under 25s make up just 12% of Bournemouth's road users, they are involved in just over a quarter of all accidents.

The pilot of Life Drive started in October 2014, and was funded through the council from the Local Sustainable Transport Fund and delivered by [SafeWise Bournemouth](#). It was developed from the principles of 'graduated driver licensing' which means new drivers have certain conditions applied to their license such as not carrying passengers or driving under supervision for a certain period of time. Graduated driver licensing is known to have reduced accidents by up to 40%, but it must be imposed by the government.

Despite discussions to do this, the UK hasn't yet opted to do graduated driver licensing so in the absence of legislation Life Drive was designed. Using both theoretical and practical training, approved driving instructors take participants through the common causes for accidents, help them to understand why most collisions occur, and provide them with the skills to avoid accidents.



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More than 100 young people have taken part in Life Drive. Many of the drivers found the course worthwhile and feel the course was good in increasing their knowledge.

We are now working to understand if these changes can be sustained over a longer period of time so we can advise the wider Dorset Road Safety Partnership on the value of the scheme.

We're still looking for people who are under 25 in Bournemouth to be involved in these scheme and you will receive a free £50 amazon voucher for taking part.

You can find out more or register [online](#).

Jo Tibbles is a health programme advisor for Public Health Dorset