

DRIVING STANDARDS – GUIDELINES FOR HRCR CLUBMANS CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITORS – JUNE 2026

The bullet points below are intended as an initial guide for competitors as we take our first steps to improve driver behaviour, assess the scale of the problem and decide what ongoing actions are required. At the recent online meeting of Clerks of Course of our championship events, the majority reported that they have received increased reports of poor competitor driving standards in recent years, both from the general public, marshals or officials and even other competitors.

At the next event you compete on, you should see a letter from Simon Fowler at Motorsport UK entitled 'Standards of Rally Driving' (copy attached), so it is a concern across the whole sport. Hence the HRCR Committee rightly considers that we should address the problem.

It is my intention that this document can be expanded and sent out to championship contenders when they register in future years. All feedback and suggestions for additional content is welcomed.

Iain Tullie, HRCR Competition Secretary, i.tullie@hrcr.co.uk

- If you aren't familiar with the 'Hierarchy of Road Users' from the Highway Code, please do read. Rule H1 is the particularly important one for us, while rules H2 and H3 specifically refer to junctions. Most of our encounters with pedestrians, cyclists and horses will be on country lanes with no pavement, so you must always consider the possibility that there could be anything in the road around the next corner that you may have to slow down for.
- Approach and pass pedestrians, cyclists and horses wide and slow. Wait for oncoming traffic if there is not sufficient space to pass. Be prepared to stop and switch off your engine for horses.
- You should always be observing speed limits, road signs and traffic laws. The event organisers have their part to play in this by ensuring that the average speeds they set are appropriate for the particular road.
- On regularity sections, remember that the roads are open to other traffic, so you must be prepared for someone coming the other way, even on private land. It could be another competitor, or it could be you going the other way if you have taken a wrong turn.
- Check your mirrors regularly – as the maximum average speed on an event is 30 mph, on some roads it is possible that you may be caught by a member of the public (or another competitor), so be prepared to pull over. It will only cost you a couple of seconds, which can easily be recovered.
- Remember that for public road regularity sections, you have a minimum of two miles from a timing point before the next one, you don't need to catch up all the lost time in the first half mile
- On 'A' roads, keep up with the flow of traffic so you don't hold anyone up. You can wait once you have turned off the main road. There should not be any regularity timing points on or just after 'A' roads.
- Be patient if you catch slower vehicles, give them plenty of space, toot horn politely and flash if it is apparent that they haven't seen you. Do not force your way past, wait until the road is wide enough. This also applies if you catch a slower competitor, either if you are making up time or they are driving at the wrong speed.
- See below for HERO-ERA's protocol when you catch a slower competitor on a test or regularity.
- If you are waved down by a member of the public, be respectful and courteous (Motorsport UK's 'Race with Respect' code requires good manners when speaking to the public as well as other competitors or officials). There could be a number of reasons why they are flagging you down, don't assume it will be a confrontation. That said, if they become violent, it may be advisable to drive on, but either way remember to report the incident to the organisers as soon as possible.
- Should you be reported for the Clerk of Course and found guilty, the penalty for driving likely to bring motor sport into disrepute is disqualification from the event. Very serious cases may also be reported to Motorsport UK who may consider further action.
- Remember that all the above apply throughout an event not just on regularities where you are the most concerned about time penalties. They also apply on your journey to and from the event!! Remember, rally drivers should be demonstrating a *HIGHER* standard of driving than the general public.

OVERTAKING ETIQUETTE:

Competitors must make every effort to ensure they do not delay other competitors, particularly on regularity sections and special tests. If caught by another car, it is obligatory for drivers to pull over or even stop to let the other car pass. Please follow the following guidelines if you catch someone or get caught:

Car 1 (the car behind)

(i) Establish if you are significantly 'late' – there is no point in going past if you are then going to slow down to 20mph right in front of them!

(ii) Flash your headlights once so the car in front knows you wish to pass

Car 2 (the car in front)

(i) Acknowledge car 1's 'request' by indicating left-right-left, briefly putting on your hazard warning lights or waving your arm clearly (not ideal in the dark...)

(ii) Immediately start to look for opportunities to safely pull over, e.g. side roads, farm entrances, laybys, passing places.

(iii) Indicate and pull over when you find somewhere, remember there may be more than one car behind you so be careful to let them all pass.

Car 1

(iii) As you pass, sound your horn (except during the hours of darkness), indicate or flash your lights to say, 'thank you'. (Also thank the driver in person at the next control or halt, where possible)

(iv) If you arrive at the next control early and are waiting, on a TC section, leave room for the car behind to pass, if they wish to.

(v) If car 2 fails to acknowledge after repeated flashes, you should remain at a safe distance and keep trying to attract their attention.

Car 1 must remember not to intimidate car 2 by following too closely or with lights and spot lights on full beam. This could easily result in an accident involving both cars. Also, consider the conditions. If it is foggy, you may not be able to go any faster when you do get in front!

Car 2 if YOU catch another car with car 1 already behind you and wanting to pass, you can follow the same procedure to 'request' to pass, but you must also still look for the opportunity to let car 1 pass you. At no point should you be drawn into driving faster to try and stay ahead of the car behind – it is more sensible to allow them past and try to follow them.

Cars who are repeatedly reported to the organisers for failing to pull over may receive a penalty.

If you pass a slower competitor on a neutral 'link' or 'road' section, you must then allow space for the slower car to regain their original road position at start of a regularity or test. This may also apply at the start of a time control section.