

**Release: Thursday 13 July 2017**

## **Close pass mat for driver education to make debut appearance in Sheffield**

The South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership (SYSRP) and CycleSheffield are joining forces to highlight the dangers of motorists driving too close to cyclists when overtaking. An officer from South Yorkshire Police will be demonstrating its new 'close pass' educational floor mat at the HSBC UK City Ride event in Sheffield on Sunday 16 July.

The specially designed mat indicates the safe distance at which drivers should pass cyclists. The Highway Code advises that drivers leave at least as much room as they would when overtaking a car. Cycling UK, who created the mat, suggest that 1.5 metres is the minimum clearance distance when passing someone on their bike.

Cyclists, and drivers who have swapped their cars for their bikes for the event, will be able to see the mat – along with a police car in situ – and pick up free cycle safety information and advice.

Ian Carey, Chair of CycleSheffield, said “We are really pleased that we are able to use this mat for the first time this weekend. Cyclists are vulnerable road users, and close passes can be very intimidating. Many cyclists, and would-be cyclists, are put off cycling on our roads because of drivers passing too close. According to Cycle UK close passes represent a third of all threatening incidents between cyclists and drivers.

“While we don't believe motorists mean to overtake closely, we welcome the opportunity to highlight the issue, and how easy it is for drivers to give us cyclists extra space.”

Joanne Wehrle, Safer Roads Manager for SYSRP, added: “Drivers and cyclists, and indeed all road users, have a responsibility for sharing the road with others. The close pass mat is a valuable tool for us to use when we are out and about at events, and as part of our driver training sessions.

“We would encourage all drivers to keep an eye out for cyclists and to slow down and give them enough room when passing by – they may suddenly need to avoid uneven road surfaces or other obstacles. We have a wealth of advice and information for drivers and cyclists on the new SYSRP website at [www.sysrp.co.uk](http://www.sysrp.co.uk).”

Cycling UK raised £12,000 through crowdfunding to make close pass mats available to all police forces that want one for their own enforcement and education initiatives. SYSRP and South Yorkshire Police are investigating the possibility of implementing a close pass campaign on our county's roads following the success of a similar scheme in the West Midlands.

**ENDS**

## **Note to Editors**

The aim of the South Yorkshire Safer Roads Partnership (SYSRP) is to reduce the number of people injured in road traffic collisions and make South Yorkshire roads safer.

The Partnership Team is available to provide advice, training, support and information on a variety of topics including safety for pedestrians, cyclists, powered two wheeled riders and drivers. If you would like some road safety advice, please visit us at [www.sysrp.co.uk](http://www.sysrp.co.uk) or email [saferroads@southyorks.pnn.police.uk](mailto:saferroads@southyorks.pnn.police.uk)

SYSRP is made up of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield Councils, Highways England, SYPTE, the University of Sheffield, the Yorkshire Ambulance Service, public health bodies, South Yorkshire Police (including South Yorkshire Safety Cameras), Peak District National Park Authority and South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue.

Further information can be found by visiting the SYSRP website [www.sysrp.co.uk](http://www.sysrp.co.uk), by calling 01709 832462 or by following on Twitter at @safer\_roads

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