

Mobility scooter safety sessions re-start in Horsham to avoid road accidents

Drivers of mobility scooters in Horsham can once again attend safety sessions to help avoid getting into bad habits and causing accidents.

By Elisabeth Wilson

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Mobility scooter session on High Street, Billingshurst

The Horsham Scooter Safety group is to restart sessions that support independence among scooter drivers after a short break due to wet and cold weather.

The sessions will give advice on staying safe, after 13 people died from accidents involving mobility scooters in 2018.

The free 90-minute sessions will take place in Horsham on Wednesday afternoons.

The session will help people better understand the law affecting mobility scooters, how to act in an emergency, protecting personal items and how to safely carry shopping or other items.

Scooter tutors will talk to volunteers one-to-one with each driver and accompany them on a short tour of pavements, advising on coping with pedestrians, dogs on leads, crossing roads and unexpected obstructions.

Attendees may have their own scooters or be thinking of getting one, and sessions can provide a scooter to use if needed.

Each session will provide a copy of the guidelines for safety, a certificate of attendance and a bright orange high-visibility jacket.

Volunteer scooter tutor Tony Ediss said: “Even experienced scooter drivers benefit from a safety session as it is easy to fall into bad driving habits and a reminder of better ways could help avoid an accident.

“Reports of scooter accidents regularly appear in the newspapers and we know that with a bit more care, most could have been avoided.

“We recommend a session with us before buying a scooter as it can help in choosing and gives a person a good grounding in basic scooter safety.

“There is no cost to a scooter driver, other than giving up 90 minutes of their time. Their gain is added safety.”

The number of reported accidents involving mobility scooters have increased over the last eight years.

In 2012, there were 84 accidents reported, causing one death, but this has steadily increased each year with 249 accidents and 13 deaths recorded in 2018.

For more information on the sessions, call 01403 269384 or visit horshamscootersafety.org.uk.