LETTER TO BRANCHES

@CWUNews The Communications Union www.cwu.org

No. 312/2026

12th November 2026

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

Road Safety Week 15 – 21 November 2026

Road Safety Week in the UK will run from 15–21 November 2026, led by the road safety charity Brake. The theme for 2026 is '*Safe People on the Move'* — focusing on the Safe System's "safe road users" pillar, emphasising that those who can cause the most harm have the greatest responsibility to protect vulnerable road users.

The purpose of Road Safety Week is to raise awareness of road deaths and injuries, promote safer behaviour and to encourage national and local conversations about road safety improvements.

Activities and Resources

Brake provides:

- A free **Road Safety Week Action Pack** with toolkits, videos, infographics, and school resources.
- **Educational Webinars** for employers and emergency services (topics include speed, distraction, fatigue).
- **Social Media Materials**, local event ideas, and opportunities to share personal stories of road crashes.

How to Take Part

Registration for Road Safety Week 2026 is open, and participants can sign up to receive updates and resources.

Road Safety Week remains the UK's largest annual road safety campaign, bringing together schools, businesses, emergency services and communities to promote safer roads for everyone.

For more information, support and ways to get involved, visit the following websites:

Road Safety Week | Brake

Road Safety GB - Road Safety Week 2026 to focus on 'Safe People on the Move'

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General Secretary: Dave Ward
@DaveWardGS Dave Ward CWU

Tyre Safety

Tyre safe has recently updated its Tyre safety calendar for 2026.

Road Safety Calendar: Tyre Safety Campaigns | TyreSafe

They will be promoting their Christmas campign in 2026 of- "Keep Your Tyres in Good 'Elf." Keep your tyres in good 'elf | TyreSafe

This is being done to
1-**Raise Tyre Safety Awareness:**
2-**Educate the public** about the importance of Tyre safety during the festive season:

Older tyres
On 26th October 2020, The Road Vehicles Construction and Use (Amendment) Regulations 2020 statutory instrument was made. It came into force on 1st February 2021.
As a result, 10-year-old and older commercial vehicle tyres became illegal in the UK from the 1st of February 2021. The CWU had campaigned heavily alongside the TYRED campaign prior to this law change. Details of that campaigning and the CWU submission to the Department for Transport's Consultation on Banning Tyres Aged 10 Years and Older can be viewed by clicking on the LTB links below.

CWU: LTB530/ 19
CWU: LTB 382/20

Shared with this LTB are Van, LCV & HGV Tyre safety ACT guides, and a CWU 'Check Your Treads' workplace poster.

This LTB is shared on behalf of CWU Central Services.

If you have any questions or need any further information, please contact:

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EASY REFERENCE GUIDE

VANS & LIGHT COMMERCIAL VEHICLE (LCV) TYRES

Vehicles up to 3,500kg GVW

DRIVERS & EMPLOYERS share a legal Duty of Care to ensure vehicle roadworthiness.

Remember to:

ACT

AIR PRESSURE
Check pressures cold against manufacturer settings for Laden vs Unladen loads.

CONDITION
Inspect sidewalls daily for kerbing cuts, bulges, and proper commercial load markings ('C' tyres).

TREAD
UK legal minimum is 1.6mm across the central 75% of tread. Heavily loaded vans need good tread depth for wet braking.

Driving with an illegal or defective tyre can result in a fine of up to £2,500 and 3 penalty points PER TYRE.

Check tyres during your **DAILY PRE-USE WALKAROUND CHECK** and before carrying heavy loads.



Simply place a 20p coin into the main tread grooves of your tyres.
Check at least three locations around each tyre.



If the outer rim of the coin is obscured
Your tread depth is above the legal limit.



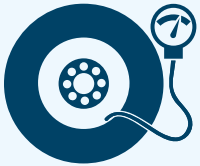
If the outer rim of the coin is VISIBLE
Your tyres may be illegal and unsafe.
Note: Heavy vans require longer stopping distances; replacing at 3mm is recommended for safety.

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HOW TO CHECK YOUR VAN & LCV TYRES

Use the QR code to view our tyre check videos

	 AIR PRESSURE & PAYLOAD	 TYRE CONDITION & LOAD RATING	 TREAD DEPTH & BRAKING DISTANCE	 DAILY CHECKS & LOAD LIMITS
WHAT IT IS	Recommended inflation pressure based on whether the van is empty (unladen) or fully loaded (laden), measured in psi or bar.	Visual inspection for structural defects, kerbing scuffs, cuts, bulges, and verifying commercial tyre suitability.	UK legal minimum of 1.6mm across the central 75% of the tread width continuously around the circumference.	Pre-use driver checks and ensuring total payload does not exceed the vehicle's legal Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW).
WHY IT IS IMPORTANT	Under-inflation combined with heavy loads creates rapid heat build-up, significantly increasing the risk of explosive blowouts, poor cornering stability, rapid shoulder wear and increased fuel consumption.	Delivery and site work cause frequent kerbing and scuffing. Vans require 'C' (Commercial) or XL (Extra Load) rated tyres; fitting standard passenger car tyres is unsafe and illegal.	Heavy van mass increases momentum; worn tread drastically increases stopping distances in the wet. Fines reach £2,500 and 3 penalty points PER TYRE.	Overloading puts extreme stress on tyre sidewalls and suspension, changing tyre shape and causing catastrophic failures. DVSA inspectors can issue immediate roadside fines and prohibition notices.
HOW TO CHECK	Check pressures weekly when tyres are cold against the vehicle handbook, door pillar plate, or fuel cap. Adjust pressures up when carrying heavy cargo.	Inspect both inner and outer sidewalls for cuts or bulges. Check the sidewall marking for the 'C' index or extra load rating matching the vehicle's Gross Vehicle Weight. Check the manufacturer's handbook for correct tyre size, speed rating and load index.	Use a 20p coin or depth gauge across the central 3/4 of the tread in multiple spots around the tyre. Report any tyre approaching 1.6mm for immediate replacement.	Incorporate tyre checks into the DVSA Daily Walkaround Routine. Check wheel nuts/studs for damage, ensure valve caps are fitted, and verify load is evenly distributed and within payload limits.

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EASY REFERENCE GUIDE

HEAVY COMMERCIAL TYRES (HGV & PCV)

Vehicles over 3,500kg GVW or 9+ passenger seats

DRIVERS & OPERATORS are legally responsible for vehicle roadworthiness.

Remember to:



AIR PRESSURE

Check inflation cold against manufacturer/ fleet load tables. Don't forget inner twin tyres!

CONDITION

Daily visual checks for cuts, bulges, exposed cords, trapped debris, and wheel security.

TREAD

Legal minimum is 1.0mm across the central 75% of the tread continuously around the tyre.

Check tyres during your **MANDATORY DAILY PRE-USE WALKAROUND CHECK**

DAILY WALKAROUND CHECKS

Drivers are legally required to perform and document pre-use tyre inspections. Any identified defect (deep cuts, bulges, trapped debris) must be reported immediately before the vehicle moves.

PROTECTING YOUR O-LICENCE

Tyre defects are a leading cause of roadside **PG9 Prohibitions** and **MOT failures**. Defective tyres directly impact your Operator Compliance Risk Score (OCRS) and can lead to Traffic Commissioner sanctions.

PENALTIES & LIABILITIES

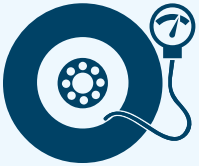
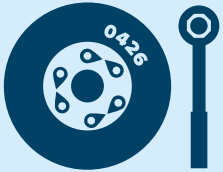
Up to **£2,500 fine and 3 penalty points PER TYRE** for the driver, plus operator prosecution if defective tyres lead to an incident.

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HOW TO CHECK YOUR HGV & PCV TYRES

	 AIR PRESSURE	 CONDITION & PHYSICAL DEFECTS	 TREAD DEPTH & LEGAL LIMITS	 TYRE AGE & WHEEL SECURITY
WHAT IT IS	Inflation pressure tailored to axle load, measured in bar or psi.	Visual and tactile inspection of sidewalls, tread surface, twin wheel gaps, and regrooving marks.	The UK legal minimum tread depth is 1.0mm across the central 3/4 (75%) of the tread width, continuously around the outer circumference.	The 10-Year Legal Age Ban on front steer axles (HGVs, buses, coaches) and all axles of single-wheeled minibuses, plus wheel nut security checks.
WHY IT IS IMPORTANT	Prevents catastrophic blowouts, excessive shoulder wear, high fuel consumption, and overheating under heavy payloads.	Trapped stones between twin wheels can cause high-speed blowouts. Exposed ply/cords or sidewall bulges will trigger an immediate DVSA Prohibition (PG9).	Illegal tyres carry fines up to £2,500 and 3 penalty points PER TYRE, risk operator license sanctions, and drastically increase wet stopping distances.	Using tyres over 10 years old on steer axles is illegal and leads to immediate MOT/DVSA failure. Loose wheel nuts lead to wheel detachment.
HOW TO CHECK	Use an accurate commercial gauge when cold. Always use calibrated extensions to check inner twin tyres. Never bleed air from warm tyres.	Run daily checks for bulges, deep cuts, or tread separation. Clear trapped debris between twin tyres. Verify regrooved tyres are correctly marked and cords are not exposed.	Measure using a calibrated tread depth gauge in multiple places around the circumference and across the central 75% of the tread width.	**Age:** Read the 4-digit DOT code on the sidewall (e.g., 2116 = week 21, year 2016). Ensure steer axle tyres are under 10 years old. **Security:** Inspect wheel nut indicators (e.g., Checkpoints) for alignment or heat distortion. Ensure retorque procedures are followed after wheel fitting.

REMEMBER: Preventative maintenance reduces **PG9 PROHIBITIONS AND MOT FAILURE RATES.**

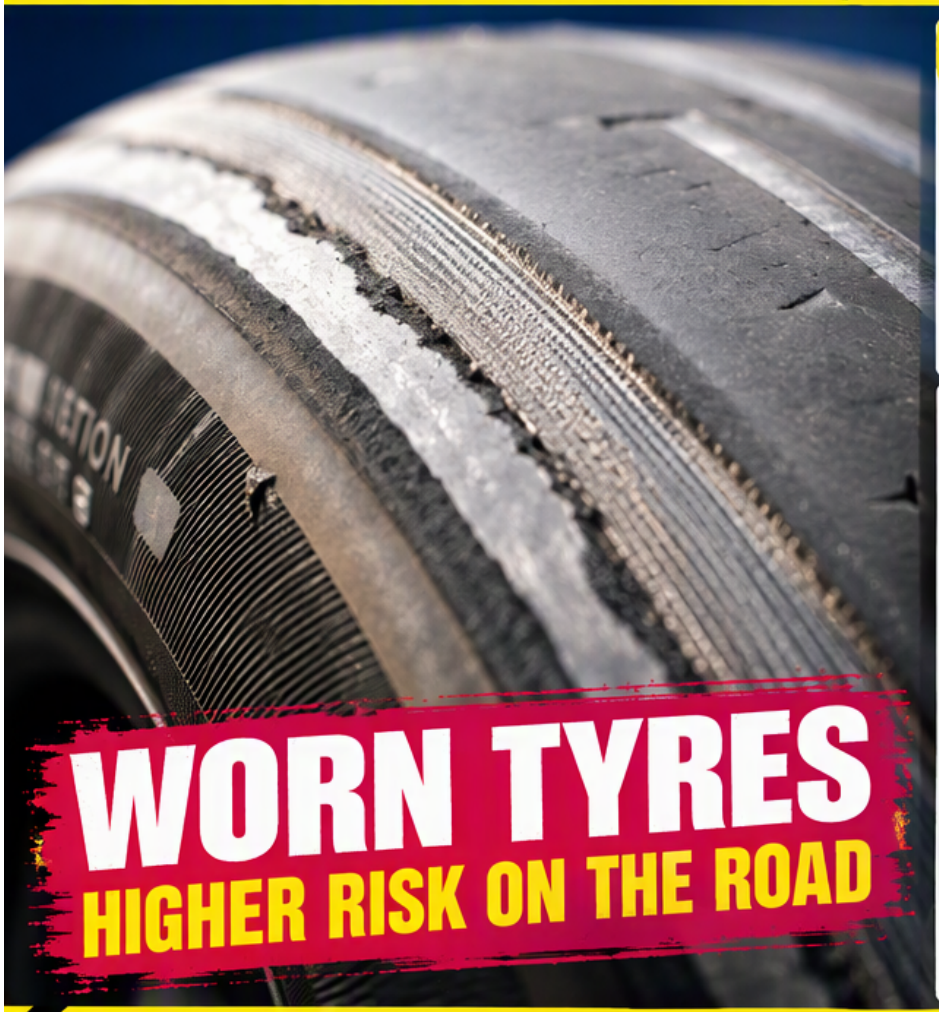
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CWU
The Communications Union

SAFER WORKPLACES
STRONGER TOGETHER

CHECK YOUR TREADS

IF THE TREAD HAS GONE, SO HAS THE GRIP



WORN TYRES
HIGHER RISK ON THE ROAD

DID YOU KNOW?

On a small van, the area where each tyre touches the road is roughly the size of a size 6 footprint.



HOW TO CHECK YOUR TREADS



- Check tread depth regularly.
- Look for uneven wear.
- Inspect shoulders and grooves.
- Check for damage and cuts.
- Report worn tyres immediately.

WORN TYRES INCREASE THE RISK OF:

- SKIDDING
- LONGER STOPPING DISTANCES
- VEHICLE INCIDENTS

STOP
Take a moment. Look for signs of tyre wear.

CHECK
Inspect your vehicle tyres regularly.

REPORT
Report worn or damaged tyres immediately.

SAFETY STARTS FROM THE GROUND UP

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