

Simple action 5

Better speeding notices for faster comprehension

The Simplification Centre is a not-for-profit organisation that helps to make information clearer. Our Simple Actions bring together volunteer designers and writers to tackle communication problems no one appears to own.

The idea is to demonstrate how much better things can be, and to provide models of good practice.

You can find out more about this activity, and others, on our website:

www.simplificationcentre.org.uk

This Simple Action was developed by Rob Waller and Nick Parker.

THAMES VALLEY POLICE
Fixed Penalty Support Unit
Thames Valley Police
PO Box 156
Banbury
OX16 2UX
Tel: 01865 293355

Please retain this page for your records

Date: 23/09/2016
DocRef: 3858061
FPN: 0433064561233120

NOTICE OF INTENDED PROSECUTION

Dear Sir/Madam

Vehicle Registration Number **BF ZCZ**

In accordance with Section 1 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988, I hereby give notice that it is intended to take proceedings against the driver of motor vehicle **BF1 ZCZ** for the alleged offence of **EXCEED 30 MPH (ATTENDED)** Recorded Speed **37** at **08:05** on **15/09/2016** at **Chisletts Hill, Pangbourne** contrary to Section **58(1)(SBB)(1) RTTRA 84 Sch 2 RTTOA 88**

This allegation WILL be supported by photographic evidence at any subsequent court hearing

STATUTORY REQUEST FOR THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE DRIVER

I am authorised by the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police to require you to provide information relating to the user of the vehicle above. In accordance with Section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 I hereby give you notice that as the registered keeper (a person having been named by the person keeping as the driver) a person who may have information which may lead to the identification of the driver of the vehicle, details of which are shown above, you are required to notify me of the name and address of the user of the said vehicle at the time and date shown above. This can be done by completing and returning the form on page 3.

- In consideration for failure to supply this information, the penalty is similar to that of the alleged offence itself (ie both a fine and penalty points). However, the maximum fine in such cases could be £1000 and the offence carries 4 or 6 penalty points.
- You are required to provide the information on page 3 of this document and scan the document to the appropriate places.
- It is an offence to knowingly and wilfully provide a false statement under Section 5 of the Perjury Act. This and offences of perverting the course of justice could both incur a term of imprisonment and/or a fine.

Under Section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 you are required to supply the information requested above within 28 days of receipt of this request. If you fail to return or complete the document correctly this will prevent the option of a Fixed Penalty being available. Please complete the required sections on page 3 clearly in BLOCK, ink using CAPITAL LETTERS.

THIS NOTICE MUST NOT BE PASSED TO ANY OTHER PERSON.

The completed form must be returned to FIXED PENALTY SUPPORT UNIT, P.O. BOX 156, WARWICK ROAD, BANBURY, OXON OX16 2UX. You are advised to obtain a certificate of posting when returning the information required.

B. Parker
By or on behalf of the Chief Officer of Police

Page 1

CITY OF MANTON POLICE
Speeding notice

This is an important notice. Do not ignore it or pass it on to anyone else, even if you were not the driver. We must get your reply by 28 October 2016.

Notice date: **23 September 2016**
Document reference: **12345678**
Fixed Penalty Num: **1234123412341234**

Mr Andrews Sample
12 Acacia Avenue
Manton
MN3 6XY

Your car was caught doing 37 in a 30 zone

Date of photo	15 September 2016
Time	08:05
Vehicle	AB51HXY
Place	Station Road, Manton
Speed limit	30 mph
Recorded speed	37 mph
Evidence	Speed camera

You need to tell us who was driving

This is so we can issue the fixed penalty to the right person. Send us the Driver or Keeper Form by 28 October 2016.

If you were the driver, tick box A on the form

If you were the driver you will be offered the chance to accept the offence without being prosecuted in court, and either:

- receive a fine and points on your licence (usually £100 and 3 points)
- or you may be able to avoid a fine and points if you go on a driver education course (please see the notes on the next page to see if you are eligible).

If you want to contest the alleged offence you must still send in the form, and you will have a chance to refer your case to a Magistrates' Court later.

If you were not the driver, tick box B on the form

If you were not the driver, you must give us details of the person who was driving the car at the time of the offence. If you did not own the car at the time you must tell us the name of the person or company who you bought it from or sold it to. You must still fill in the form yourself. Do not pass it on to anyone else.

Contacting us

Keep this page for your records, and send the form to:
Fixed Penalty Support Unit,
City of Manton Police,
PO Box 123,
Manton MN3 2UX
Helpline 01234 567890

Legal notes

This is a Notice of Intended Prosecution issued in accordance with Section 1 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. It is also a Statutory Request for the name and address of the driver under Section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The alleged speeding offence is contrary to Section 58(1)(SBB)(1) RTTRA 84 Sch 2 RTTOA 88. If you knowingly provide false information, you will be committing an offence under Section 5 of the Perjury Act. Date Posted: Section 176B information you supply may be held on a computer.

Our Simple Action 1 took a bus lane penalty charge notice and showed how its chaotic, impenetrable design could be made much clearer. A friend sent us a similar notice when he was caught speeding recently, and we thought it would be interesting to see if the bus lane notice would work as a template for this too.

We think it works just as well. The new design tells the story straight away. What's happened, what's this letter for, what to do now.

The redesign

The new design uses the same template we used for our Bus Lane Penalty Charge redesign. Clear headings sit in their own space on the left, so you can read down them for the main story. Thick rules divide off the sections, so you read in short chunks. And the language is simplified to reflect what it means to people, not how the regulations are worded.

- A **clear title** says what it is, ('Speeding notice). The speed limit icon is instantly recognisable.
- The left hand column **tells a story in headline form**. 'Your car was caught...' 'You need to tell us...' The purpose is made clear: they need to establish who was driving.
- The **three response options on the form** are made clear, with explanatory notes about why the information is needed. They also give some idea of what the penalty might be.
- **Actual dates** are given, not 'within 28 days of receipt of this request'. This makes it clear what actual date they have in mind.
- The **photographic evidence** is included, making a more convincing case.
- The **legal references** are grouped together to make it clear how this notice fulfils statutory purposes..



Speeding notice



This is an important notice. Do not ignore it or pass it on to anyone else, even if you were not the driver. We must get your reply by 28 October 2016

Notice date: **23 September 2016**
Document reference: **12345678**
Fixed Penalty Num. **1234123412341234**

Mr Andrew Sample
12 Acacia Avenue
Manton
MN3 6XY

Your car was recorded doing 37 in a 30 zone

Date of photo	15 September 2016	
Time	08.05	
Vehicle	AB51HTY	
Place	Station Road, Manton	
Speed limit	30 mph	
Recorded speed	37 mph	
Evidence	Speed camera	

You need to tell us who was driving

This is so we can issue the fixed penalty to the right person. Send us the Driver or Keeper Form by 28 October 2016.

If you were the driver, tick box A on the form

If you were the driver, you will be offered the chance to accept the offence without being prosecuted in court, and either

- receive a fine and points on your license (usually £100 and 3 points).
- **or** you may be able to avoid a fine and points if you go on a driver education course (please see the notes on the next page to see if you are eligible).

If you want to contest the alleged offence you must still send in the form, and you will have a chance to refer your case to a Magistrates' Court later.

If you were not the driver, tick box B or C on the form

If you were not the driver, you must give us details of the person who was driving the car at the time of the offence.

If you did not own the car at the time, you must tell us the name of the person or company who you bought it from or sold it to.

You must still fill in the form yourself. Do not pass it on to anyone else.

Contacting us

Keep this page for your records, and send the form to:

Fixed Penalty Support Unit,
City of Manton Police,
PO Box 123,
Manton MN1 2UX

Helpline 01234 567890

Legal notes

This is a Notice of Intended Prosecution issued in accordance with Section 1 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988. It is also a Statutory Request for the name and address of the driver under Section 172 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

The alleged speeding offence is contrary to Section S81(1) RTRA 84 Sch 2 RTOA 88.

If you knowingly provide false information, you will be committing an offence under Section 5 of the Perjury Act.

Data Protection Act 1998: information you supply may be held on a computer.

The form: original

No white space is unfilled, few elements align. It would be interesting to know the error rate for this form – possibly lower than we might expect, given that failure could apparently mean prison. People probably work quite hard to get it right.

Please read through this form, including any notes, before completing it. Complete in black ink.

S172
23/09/2016
15/09/2016

SECTION 172 (DRIVER/KEEPER) STATEMENT (Criminal Procedure Rules, r27.2 / C.J. Act 1967, s9 / M.C. Act 1980, s5B). **WARNING:** It is an offence to provide a false statement. The maximum penalty for such is imprisonment and/or a fine.

Do not pass to another person to complete.

M:
2:
F:
F:
R:
R:

DATA PROTECTION ACT
1998: Information supplied on the form may be held on a computer.

FPN: 0433064561233120
DocRef: 3858061

Please Return To:
Fixed Penalty Support Unit
Thames Valley Police
PO Box 156
BANBURY
OX16 2UX
Help line: 01865 293355

Were you the driver at the time of the alleged offence?

YES: Fully complete and sign Parts 1 and 4.
If your details are not correct, also complete Part 3.
Please enclose a copy of your licence if it is NOT issued by DVLA.

NO: Complete parts 2 & 3
Complete and sign Part 4

Part 1.
I was the driver at the time of the alleged offence. Signed _____

Licence issued by DVLA NI or EU licence Other Provisional licence

DRIVER NUMBER (Please provide in ALL cases. If you hold a UK licence, your number will start with the first few letters of your surname. Non UK licence numbers will vary). Date of birth: (DDMMYYYY)

If you wish to be considered for a driver education course (subject to eligibility) tick this box. See page 2 of this form for eligibility criteria. Your details will be checked against a national database to establish if you are eligible. They will not be passed to any third party. If you do not tick the box you will not be offered a course.

Part 2. If you were not the driver, please tick the option which best describes your situation. Please tick only ONE box.

I can provide details of the driver/hirer at the time of the alleged offence.

At the time of the offence I was not the owner/keeper. I had sold/purchased** the vehicle before/after** the date of the alleged offence. (** delete as necessary). Date of Sale/purchase:

Now enter the details of the driver/hirer/owner at the time of the alleged offence in Part 3, and complete and sign Part 4

Part 3. You are required by law to complete the details of the person/company to whom you gave permission to drive the vehicle at the time of the alleged offence or the details of the keeper at the time of the alleged offence.

If nominating a company, please tick Company name: _____

Title: _____ Surname: _____

Forenames: _____

House no/ name: _____

Street: _____

Town: _____

County: _____

Post Code: _____ Date of birth: (DDMMYYYY) _____

Part 4. Declaration. Please fill in this part in all cases

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Please give your FULL names: _____

Age if under 18: _____ (if over 18 insert "over 18")

If signing on behalf of a company, please give your job title: _____

Date signed (DDMMYYYY): _____ Signed: _____

You must complete, sign and return this original document. A photocopy is NOT acceptable.

The form: redesign

The new form is uncluttered and uses white space to direct the eye across the three choices to the signature area. We've used plain English where possible, and have tried to calm the design to encourage careful reading.

- A **clear title** tells us the purpose of the form.
- The **return date**, already mentioned twice on the front page, is repeated again. It's important to guide people about how to comply, rather than just threaten them with the consequence of failure.
- The **response options** are labelled **A, B** and **C**. We started with 1, 2 and 3, which lookd better (slightly less technical) but could be misunderstood as a sequence of steps. They only need to be labelled because we refer to them on the first page.
- **The respondent's name** is preprinted – this reinforces the instruction not to pass it to anyone else to fill in. The assumption is that this is a data-driven dynamic document, so in the event of a company as the addressee, a different version of this section would appear.

Driver or Keeper Form

We have written to you, Andrew Sample, because you are the registered keeper of the vehicle that was caught speeding.

Even if you were not the driver, you must fill in, sign, and send back this form by 28/10/16. The penalty for not doing so is a fine which could be as much £1000, and up to 6 penalty points. If you knowingly provide false information, you will be committing an offence under the Perjury Act.



Doc 12345678
FPN.1234123412341234

Tick one box only below. Use black ink.

A **I was the driver at the time of the alleged offence**

Date of birth

Driving licence number

Licence issued by DVLA N Ireland or EU Other

Full or provisional? Full licence Provisional licence

Do you wish to be considered for a driver education course? Yes No
Your name will be checked against a national database to see if you are eligible.

B **I was not the driver of the car but I know who it was**

Tell us the name and address of the person who was driving

Title (Mr, Ms etc)

Forenames

Surname

Address

Postcode

C **I was not the owner of the car at the time of the alleged offence**

What date did you sell or buy the car?

Who did you sell it to / buy it from?

Company name

Title (Mr, Ms etc)

Forenames

Surname

Address

Postcode

Sign here

I confirm that this information is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I understand that if I knowingly give false information I could be prosecuted under the Perjury Act.

Full name

Job title, if signing for a company

Date of birth, if under 18

Signature

Date of signing

Send the original form to

Fixed Penalty Support Unit,
City of Manton Police,
PO Box 123,
Manton MN1 2UX.

Send the original not a photocopy. Do not send your driving licence. Get proof of postage.

Feasibility

In our report on the bus lane notice, we include a discussion of legal issues, and we believe similar points apply here.

Legislation uses precise and technical language to specify the requirements to communicate, but that does not mean the communications themselves have to be worded in the same way. Instead, authorities have a duty of care to communicate in a way that can be understood by the majority of the population.

Commercial companies are obliged by the Consumer Rights Act to provide information that is legible and comprehensible – public bodies should be held to the same standards. Literacy statistics show that a large proportion of the UK population struggle with complex information.¹ Many public agencies demonstrate their duty of care in the way they communicate – for example, by providing translations of key communications into other languages, and by conforming to RNIB guidelines on the legibility of type. There seems no reason why documents about the enforcement of driving regulations should be any different.

At the same time we acknowledge any new documents would have to be rigorously assessed to check they did not give grounds for spurious appeals.

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¹ According to the 2011 Skills for Life Survey, 43% of the UK population have literacy skills below Level 1, the level required to cope with the Penalty Charge Notice. See 'Skill for Life Survey 2011: Headline findings', BIS Research Paper 57, Department of Business, Innovation & Skills.



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The latest version may be downloaded from: www.simplificationcentre.org.uk/simple-actions

About Simple Actions

Most of us don't complain when we come across information that's poorly written or designed – for example, a mobile phone contract, an application form, or a user guide. We cope and make do, we blame ourselves for not being clever enough, we make mistakes, or if we have a choice we might just chuck it away. For one thing, it's probably not worth complaining, and we wouldn't know who to complain to anyway.

It's not obvious to everyone how to improve poor documents. A lot of everyday information could be better, but we've got used to it and assume that, like the rain, there's nothing we can do. But that's often not true, and with a little effort we can set much higher standards.

So the Simplification Centre has got together a group of volunteer information designers and writers to challenge the quality of everyday information.

They work together to take on 'orphan design projects' – those communications that no one seems to own or look after, but that really matter. Their work is published on the Simplification Centre website, where anyone can comment, or borrow the ideas under a Creative Commons license (www.simplificationcentre.org.uk/simple-actions).



One of our Simple Actions days, with a group of volunteer information designers.