

Written evidence submitted by Andrew Garbett (RSS0107)

This submission contains potentially distressing personal accounts from a bereaved family.

My name is Andrew Garbett, I am Harvey Owen's Grandfather.

Harvey is no longer with us due to his death in November 2023. His death could have been prevented had there have been a change to the current legislation that allows young inexperienced drivers to carry other young passengers.

Harvey was a rear seat passenger in a car being driven by an 18 year old driver who was not known to the family and had passed his test only 6 months earlier. It wasn't only Harvey who had his life cut short that day as all 4 boys in the car were tragically killed. Harvey Had just turned 17 only 13 days before his untimely death, with the other 2 passengers aged 17 and 16. The car they were in ended up in a deep water filled drainage ditch which resulted in all 4 boys drowning with no hope of an escape. Our Daughter Crystal has been campaigning for Graduated Driving Licences to be implemented ever since the loss of her only son. I and my wife Sylvia have tried to support Crystal in the best way we can, but there are only a limited amount of words you can use after such a tragic and avoidable loss of life, and no amount of support can ever replace the loss she and the extended family have had to endure. This is why I wish to advocate the introduction of a Graduated Driving Licence system for young inexperienced drivers. Harvey is our personal loss, but unfortunately there are other families suffering in the same we are, and will continue to do so until this legislation is enforced by a government that cares for its population of young inexperienced drivers. This doesn't just affect young drivers and their families, but also the emergency services that have to pick up the pieces of this kind of carnage, not to mention the people who have to convey the sad news of the loss of life of a loved one to the families involved.

March 2026