

Elderly Motorist Killed in A39 Crash Near Chilton Polden as Road Remains Closed

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A fatal collision on the A39 near Chilton Polden in Somerset has left one man dead and caused significant disruption, with the road closed in both directions to allow for emergency response and investigation. The incident, which occurred during the early afternoon on Wednesday, 31 July, involved a car and a lorry, prompting a full-scale response from Avon and Somerset Police and other emergency services.

The crash took place at around 1:30 pm and involved a black Citroën C4 Cactus and a Mercedes heavy goods vehicle (HGV). The driver of the Citroën, a man in his 80s, died at the scene despite the efforts of paramedics. No other injuries have been reported. Police confirmed that the man's next of kin have been informed and are being supported by a family liaison officer.

In a formal statement issued later in the day, a spokesperson for Avon and Somerset Police said: "A man has sadly died after a collision on the A39 near Chilton Polden this afternoon (31 July). Emergency services were called at 1.30 pm to reports of the collision, which involved a black Citroën C4 Cactus car and a Mercedes lorry. Despite the best efforts of medics at the scene, the driver of the car, a man aged in his 80s, sadly died at the scene. His family have been updated, and our thoughts are with them. They will be supported by a specially trained family liaison officer."

The A39 remains closed in both directions between the junctions with Ford Lane and Holywell Road. This section of the route is likely to stay shut for several hours while collision investigators carry out forensic assessments. Avon and Somerset Police have urged road users to avoid the area and seek alternative routes where possible.

The road closure has already caused notable traffic congestion in surrounding areas, especially through Chilton Polden, as motorists attempt to navigate local backroads. Traffic monitoring site Inrix, which issued its first update on the incident at 44:49 pm, reported: "A39 Bath Road in both directions closed, queueing traffic due to serious accident between Ford Lane and Moor Road. Congestion to routes through Chilton Polden as traffic heads away."

The A39 is a vital transport corridor in the South West, connecting towns and villages across Somerset and beyond. It accommodates a significant mix of local drivers and commercial vehicles. The disruption caused by this incident is a reminder of how vulnerable key infrastructure can be when serious incidents occur, particularly on major A roads without immediate alternatives.

Police are continuing to appeal for witnesses and any dashcam footage that may assist with the investigation. Anyone who saw the collision or has relevant footage is asked to contact Avon and Somerset Police on 101, quoting the reference number 5225216004.

While no arrests have been made in connection with the collision, the investigation remains ongoing. Recovery vehicles and specialist officers are expected to remain on site until a full assessment has been completed and the road can be safely reopened.

Motorists are being advised to monitor local travel reports and allow extra time for their journeys if travelling in the area. As of Wednesday evening, there has been no confirmation as to when the road will fully reopen. Further updates from the police are expected in due course.