

In advance of the study, drivers were alerted by the bus company to the study through the use of a poster which was communicated via the appropriate depot – see Figure 11. In addition, the Transport Safety Manager had conversations with drivers on this route in relation to what the lights were and what they were trying to achieve. It should be noted here that no information was provided to other road users or passengers either before or during the study.



Figure 11: Poster informing drivers of the trial

The managers at the bus company decided to inform the drivers in this way because it was thought that providing any additional information would cause heightened levels of awareness and cause them to change their driving behaviour. This might then have rendered inaccurate any measurements of the effectiveness of the lights.

1.1.1.1 Procedure

Prior to the focus group, drivers were provided with an information sheet explaining the background to the research and providing contact details of the research team. Participants were then asked to sign an informed consent form which included details about the recording of the discussion. The participating drivers were encouraged to treat the experience as an informal discussion about their experiences of the OSMDLS lights in the static and flashing conditions, and to express their honest opinions. It was stressed that the research (and therefore the discussion) was really important for the evaluation of the lights. Drivers were urged to talk to each other and to the researcher during the discussion and thereby share experience. It was emphasised to participants that all information they provided would be confidential, with no individuals being identified in any reports. The focus groups were facilitated by one researcher.

1.1.2 Interviews with managers and other stakeholders

A total of seven one-to-one interviews were conducted either by telephone or online. The interviews followed on from the bus driver focus group to determine a range of opinions of the OSMDLS lights. The data collection took place in May 2021.