



Mid Wales Matters



The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

Web site: mwam.powys.gov.uk

Volume 1, Issue 4

In this issue:

Chief Observers Observations	2
Observer Classifications	2
New Members	3
Members Corner	3
Web Site	3
Associate Recruitment	3
IAM Examiners	4
Situations Vacant	4
Associate Course Dates	4
Observer Training Dates	4
Your Committee	4

Chairman's Comment

Twelve months have elapsed since the inaugural meeting was held at the Metropole Hotel in Llandrindod Wells to kick start the new IAM group, now known as "Mid Wales Advanced Motorists" or MWAM for short. The membership has grown over this period by signing up associates with the IAM "The Skill for Life" scheme, and passing the advanced driving test, also attracting existing IAM members residing in Mid Wales. As you can see from Situations Vacant, we are short of Committee Members which has caused some difficulties. These have been overcome temporarily by some members wearing two Committee hats. This has unfortunately meant that we have been unable to arrange some social events i.e. Quiz nights, Sunday morning outings, and social evenings when we would have invited guest speakers to talk on various subjects of interest.

We are planning to hold our Annual General Meeting next March but the date is still to be confirmed. As for myself, I would like to stand down from the Chairmanship as I feel a younger, more energetic person is needed for this office. We shall be asking for nominations for all officers and committee in the next newsletter. Finally, I would point out that this is your newsletter, and we welcome contributions from you on any subject you feel would be of interest to your fellow members.

Norman Wood

IAM National Conference 2004

This was held on Saturday 9th October 2004 at Dunstall Park Racecourse, Wolverhampton. The theme of this year's conference was to assist Observers and to increase the throughput of Associates. As secretary of MWAM I was delegated to attend and was accompanied by your Publicity Officer, Ron Collins. The event was very well attended by over 400 hundred delegates representing the 206 local groups throughout the whole of the UK. It was very gratifying to see the level of support that the IAM has and makes you realize that even a small cog like MWAM contributes to the smooth running of a large machine. It is not feasible to summarize the conference in such a short article but members will no doubt look forward to the reports and photographs which will be featured in the next issue of Advanced Driving magazine. Suffice to say that both Ron and I found the presentations attended, information gained, contacts made and discussions held at the conference was worth the personal effort we made to attend. I'm sure that MWAM will benefit from these experiences.

Geoff Smith

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This Newsletter is a forum for tips, anecdotes and comment from our membership. It is your voice to each other as much as it is to inform you of what the group is doing.

The Editor welcomes articles and letters for publication in this newsletter. Please note that all such contributions must have the full identity of the writer (not necessarily for publication) and a contact telephone number. Articles are accepted on the condition that they may be edited.

Chief Observer's Observations

I'm afraid I have to start my observations with the bad news in that our Newsletter Editor, Ralph Pettitt has resigned from the post.

Since retiring from real work Ralph and his wife June have dedicated themselves to travelling extensively around Europe and beyond. Due to the time travelling and seeing the world, Ralph just hasn't had the time necessary to dedicate to the MWAM.

We are grateful to Ralph for the excellent way he set up our newsletter, Mid Wales Matters. We can only wish Ralph and June good luck for the future and happy wandering.

This means of course that we are now looking for a replacement Newsletter Editor and also a Membership Secretary a position also held by Ralph. Geoff Smith our already hardworking secretary and I are going to try and hold the fort until we can get someone to carry on the good work.

There are a number of posts we need to fill really rather quickly if MWAM is going to fulfil it's roll. Have a look at the situations vacant column and see if you fit the bill. Don't worry if think you might feel like a new kid, believe me you will be welcomed with open arms!

Also we welcome Ron Collins to the committee as our Publicity Officer. Ron is an experienced DOE driving examiner and has been a member of the group from the beginning. As an observer he has helped three of his associates through the advanced IAM test and one other is ready for test as we go to print.

As a group we are having considerable success in getting associates through the advanced test. In the short time we have been in existence we have had seven take and pass the test so far and a number are waiting for dates. By any one's standards in the time we have been up and running and the small number of observers we have that is pretty good.

Observer Classifications

Members may like to know that the IAM currently recognizes four classes of Observer:-

1. Trainee Observer

Those undergoing basic group training to achieve Qualified status within 12 months.

2. Group Observer

This classification is only for those who were active prior to 1 January 2002. This is no longer conferred as only classes 3 & 4 are open to new observers.

Further to that we have our Road Safety Committee member Meg Lewis to thank for the considerable influx of new associates seeking training. Meg publicised the group throughout the Powys County Council network and the response has been very encouraging.

In a similar vein, we really are rather desperate for more group observers. We need experienced advanced drivers throughout our area to observe and advise new associates. The current group observers meet once a month at various locations in our area and observe each other's driving. This is so we can keep our own standards high and to train new observers. A number of dates and locations are published on the group web site and are included in this newsletter. Have a look and if you like the idea of becoming an observer let either Geoff or me know you're coming. We can't guarantee that you will be allocated an associate every time, but the group is growing. We desperately need some ladies to come and train as observers, at the moment we seem to consist of male middle-aged fogies and nothing else.

As always we are looking for letters, suggestions or comments (not too rude), articles or even information for one of our group to follow up, lets have it and we'll use it. It can be anything you want. If you want to be controversial, lets have it. Here are some ideas for starters!

- I think speed cameras are wonderful things!
- I think men and women drivers as bad or as good as one another!
- Is there such a thing as a careful young driver?
- Bring back Traffic Police!
- I think speed limits are too low; they encourage drivers to break the law!
- What about twenty miles an hour speed limits outside schools twenty four hours a day, is that ridiculous or what?

Steve Woolley

3. Qualified Observer

This status is certified by a Senior Observer within a group. It requires passing written and practical tests defined by the IAM¹.

4. Senior Observer

A Qualified Observer who has passed additional practical tests with an IAM Examiner and an Associate under training.

¹ Observer Qualification Guide

New Members

Congratulations and a warm welcome as Members to the following Associates who were successful in their IAM Advanced Driving Test.

Name	Location	Observer	Date
Sam Thompsons	Aberystwyth	Rees Thomas	July 04
Alison Tong	Builth Wells	Ron Collins	August 04
Dewi Jarman	Llanyre	Geoff Smith	August 04
Didi Lush	Llandrindod Wells	Geoff Smith	Sept 04
Charles Austin	Llandrindod Wells	Ron Collins	Sept 04
Neil Owen	Rhayader	Steve Woolley	Sept 04
Paul Derrick	Builth Wells	Ron Collins	Oct 04

Members Corner

Skid-Pan Training

The Secretary has received a request from a member enquiring if MWAM could provide 'Skid-Pan' training for its members. This is an excellent idea but will only be possible if sufficient numbers are prepared to pay for an appropriate course. Unfortunately, such a course would only be available outside our region and would involve the group in organizing such a venture. If you are interested in participating in this activity will you please make yourself known to Ron Collins. If we have a viable number Ron will investigate the costs and if acceptable will organize such an event.

Web Site

Some Members may not be aware that MWAM has its own web site, its address is mwam.powys.org.uk. (Note that this should not be preceded with www.). For people with access to the web this is should be the first place to look as it contains frequently updated information about the group and its activities. There is a Forum area on this site where you can air and exchange your views on advanced driving and other motoring related issue with like minded people. It also has links to the IAM and other local group's web sites. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding our web site please contact the web master Geoff Smith.

Associate Recruitment

Members will no doubt be very proud of their own personal achievement in becoming an IAM Member. MWAM, no doubt like lots of other groups, seeks to encourage its members to actively recruit new associates. Often friends and work colleagues, who know of your interest in driving, ask "What's this advanced driving all about then?" Help is at hand if you feel that you are ill prepared to answer this challenge! The IAM has produced an Associate Recruitment Guide as a booklet to help any Group Members who seeks to persuade others about the benefits of advanced driving. The guidance on the techniques to use is very straight forward and emphasizes the benefits to the individual of IAM membership. It contains advice on how to answer frequently asked questions and useful statistics to discuss with a potential associate. Did you know, for example, that the worst time for accidents is between 4pm and 5pm on a Friday? If you would like a copy of this booklet to help you persuade others to join the Skill for Life scheme please contact our secretary Geoff Smith.

IAM Examiners

The IAM have appointed two Examiners to conduct their Advanced Test for the Mid Wales Region. They are Sean Westlake who lives at Crossgates and Mark Davies who lives in Builth Wells both are serving police officers. Sean is authorized to examine on Cars, Motorcycles and Minibuses and Mark on Cars and Motorcycles. This means that our Associates will be able to request their IAM Test to take place within our region and it should also ensure that such tests will be promptly arranged.

Situations Vacant

Newsletter Editor

To edit, print and distribute our newsletter

Mid Wales Matters

Membership Secretary

To maintain Membership Records and collect Annual subscriptions

Events Co-ordinator

To Organise Events, with the help of other group members

These positions would carry the additional benefit of being a Committee Member where you can influence the future of your group. Please contact our secretary Geoff Smith if you would like further information and are able to fill any of these vacancies

Associate Course Dates

Course	Start Date	Day	Time	Location
04/4	24 Nov 04	Wednesday	7:00pm to 9:30pm	T.B.A
05/1	26 Jan 05	Wednesday	7:00pm to 9:30pm	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod

Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Location	Times
20/11/2004	Saturday	Crossgates, Knill's Car Park	10:00am to 12:00M
18/12/2004	Saturday	Newtown, Safeway Car Park	10:00am to 12:00M
15/01/2005	Saturday	Builth Wells, Co-operative Car Park	10:00am to 12:00M
19/02/2005	Saturday	Crossgates, Knill's Car Park	10:00am to 12:00M
19/03/2005	Saturday	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells (Including written exercise)	10:00am to 12:00M
16/04/2005	Saturday	Newtown, Safeway Car Park	10:00am to 12:00M

Your Committee

GROUP CHAIRMAN Norman Wood	93 The Dell ,Caerwnon Park Builth Wells, Powys LD2 3SP	01982 553181
GROUP CONTACT & SECRETARY Geoff Smith	Heddfan, Cortay Park, Llanyre Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 6DT	01597 823442 geoffrey.smith3@which.net
TREASURER Clive Payne	Tiled House, Rhos-y-Meirch Knighton, Powys LD7 1NG	01547 528602 clive.payne@nuffield.oxford.ac.uk
CHIEF OBSERVER & ASSOCIATES CO-ORDINATOR Stephen Woolley	Bryneithin Bwlch-y-Sarnau Rhayader ,Powys LD6 5ND	01597 870607 bryneithin@oxfree.com
PUBLICITY OFFICER Ron Collins	Collen, Spa Road, Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5ER	01597 822004
Martin Backhouse	1 Woodside Cottages, Aberbechan Newtown, Powys SY16 3AU	01686 627970
Meg Lewis Powys Road Safety Officer	Cwm Howey, Holly Lane, Howey Llandrindod Wells, Powys LD1 5PP	01597 823409 megl@powys.gov.uk
Neil Owen Motorcycle Member	17 Maes Mawr, Rhayader Powys LD6 5PL	01597 810738 sinbo1@hotmail.com
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Vacant	
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Vacant	
EVENTS CO-ORDINATOR	Vacant	

Mid Wales Advanced Motorists (MWAM) publish this Newsletter to provide a means of communication within the group to Members and Associates. The opinions are those of the Editor and individual contributors and do not necessarily represent the view of MWAM or the Institute of Advanced Motorists to which it is affiliated.