



Mid Wales Matters



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The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

Web site: mwam.powys.org.uk

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Chairman's Comment

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The other day I followed a car for 2 miles, and in that distance the driver never gave a signal to indicate where he was going. As it happens we were both headed for Morrisons, and when we stopped close to each other in the car park, I felt it my duty as a high MWAM official to confront the man with his shortcomings. "Do you know what that little lever at the side of your steering column is for," I asked politely. "Course I bloody well do!" came the rather curt reply. "Why do you ask?" I then went on to explain the proper use of indicators and its importance for the safety of all road users. "Are you a driving examiner, then?" he enquired. When told of my association with MWAM / IAM he seemed impressed and our conversation continued on a much friendlier basis. It turned out that we were both steam railway buffs, and we stood there for some time discussing our common interest.

It's a strange old life, isn't it? What's the connection between Morrisons, MWAM and steam railways? Now you know!

I do hope my new acquaintance remembers to indicate on his travels!
Safe driving!

Francis Torrens

Success has its problems!

More people are hearing about MWAM and this means that the number of applicants for IAM training in the area is increasing. Good news, of course, but the downside of this trend is that there is increasing pressure on our small group of observers who already give so generously of their time. How would YOU like to qualify as an observer? The work isn't as daunting as it may appear – you have, after all, learnt and practised the skills which need to be taught – and the satisfaction of handing on your knowledge and expertise is tremendous, especially when your associate passes the IAM test.

If you would like to know more about what is involved in becoming and practising as an observer, please contact either Geoff Smith (01597 823442) or Humphrey Morgan (01597 822082). Your help would really make a difference.

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.

Editor's Spot

Some time ago I received an e-mail from Haydn Davies, one of our members who ministers to several parishes bordering on the A483 near Llanbadarn Fynydd. He expressed concern about the increasing number of serious and fatal accidents involving motorcycles that were happening in his area and wondered if the IAM could do something to improve the situation. He had read that the stretch between Crossgates and Newtown was in the top ten roads in Wales for "racing" these machines.

On the message board of Motorcycle News I did find evidence that the A483 was highly prized as a biking experience. The non-stop bends and lack of police presence were cited as important factors in the enjoyment to be had. There was, however, no reference to racing.

All the IAM can do is train as many motorcyclists as possible to ride in a skilful and responsible way. It is interesting to note here that more motorcyclists than motorists are being recruited into the IAM nationally. MWAM is playing its part through Sean Miles who looks after our m/c section. His first associates are now ready for the test, and we wish them all success.

Skid pan training

I am trying to arrange skid pan training for MWAM members.

We have previously used the Police Skid Pan at Hixon, Stafford and if we use this again we have a couple of options; we can either block book a Saturday which means we're committed to booking a minimum of 9 places with sessions at 9am, 10.30am, 12noon and 1.30pm. The earliest I could arrange a Saturday would be November. However, if members could manage to get there during the week I could book sessions on a more ad-hoc basis once we have identified three people who can go on the same day. Members will have to make their own way to Hixon. Although it may be possible for you to arrange to share the transport once the groups are worked out. I haven't worked out the final figures yet but each place will cost in the region of £45 to £50 per person. It may also be possible to include non-members if you are able to make up a group of three. A session at Hixon consists of three people going in a car with a Police Instructor for an hour and a half; each person takes a turn at driving and they will experience front wheel skids; rear wheel skids and four wheel skids, with instruction on how to prevent and rectify the situation.

We also have another option, there's a company called 'Skids r Us' based in South Wales, the man that owns the company told me that he has a skid car and a big space in which to have instruction. If you want some more information have a look at the following website www.skidsrus.co.uk. Again the instructor takes 3 people at a time for around 2 hours and gives instruction, this costs £150 per car (£50 per person) but if we have 12 people willing to go on the same day and they book via MWAM there will be a bit of discount.

Please let me know what you prefer either by emailing me or by completing the enclosed form and returning it to me – see contact details on last page. As it will take time to co-ordinate the sessions I would like to be able to get on with it as soon as possible, so I would appreciate getting your responses back by 30th September 2006 at the latest so that I can make any necessary bookings and get back to you.

Pat Allen

If you have any comments or even an article of your own, which you would like to submit for Member's Corner in the next newsletter, do, please let me have them. Apart from your thoughts on matters of national importance, I would welcome views or items of news that are of relevance to the MWAM area in particular

Drive Check activities

Mid Wales Advanced Motorists group is pleased to announce that it has provided five Members of Parliament and Welsh Assembly Members with a free assessment of their driving as part of the IAM DriveCheck initiative. They are pictured here with Geoff Smith (featured in every photo!), Humphrey Morgan and Frank Torrens. What did they have to say about their experiences?



Kirsty Williams - Welsh Liberal Democrat Assembly Member for Brecon & Radnorshire – “Driving is a dangerous activity, and yet few of us get any additional training after passing our original test.”

Roger Williams - Member of Parliament for Brecon & Radnorshire
“I’m delighted to have been the first parliamentarian in Wales to have undertaken this assessment.”



Lembit Öpik – Member of Parliament for Montgomeryshire – “No one should be worried about taking this course because the feedback is given in a positive and un-patronising way. People should think of DriveCheck as a driving health check.”



Glyn Davies – Conservative Assembly Member for Mid & West Wales is - “Be safe, get checked, drive better’



Mick Bates - Welsh Liberal Democrat Assembly Member for Montgomeryshire – “I would enthusiastically encourage people to take the advanced driving assessment for themselves’.

All the AMs and MPs seemed pleased to have participated, and we hope that their driving skills have been improved.

Situations Vacant

Chief Observer

To organise the training and accreditation of observers

Associate Co-ordinator

To organise the allocation of associates to observers.

Membership Secretary

To organise the group’s membership records

New Members

Congratulations and a warm welcome to the following members on passing their IAM test.

Name	Location	Observer	Date
Judith Lloyd-Thomas	Llandrindod Wells	Geoff Smith	May 06
Sandra M-Ames	Three Cocks	Roger Wingfield	Jun 06
Margaret Reid	Howey	Geoff Smith	Jun 06
Paul Davies	Cilmary	Geoff Smith	Jul 06
Ian Carter	Whitton	Paul Wilson	Jul 06
Eifion Jones	Brecon	Roger Wingfield	Aug 06

Associate Course Dates

Course	Start Date	Day	Times		Location
06/5	04/10/2006	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
06/6	06/12/2006	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Times		Location
17/09/2006	Sunday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Builth Wells, Co-operative Car Park
14/10/2006	Saturday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Crossgates, Knill's Car Park
5/11/2006	Sunday	10:00 AM	12:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/12/2006	Saturday	2:00 PM	4:00 PM	Newtown, Morrisons Car Park

Please note that all the above-published dates and venues may be subject to change due to circumstances beyond the committee's control. For the latest information, visit our web site: mwam.powys.org.uk or contact the group secretary.

Please contact Humphrey Morgan (01597 822082) who will be co-ordinating observer training if you require any further details.

Your Committee

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CHIEF OBSERVER	Vacant	
ASSOCIATE 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.



Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

SKID PAN TRAINING – REPLY FORM

	YES	NO
I am interested in undertaking skid pan training at Hixon, Stafford		
I am interested in undertaking skid pan training in South Wales		

(Please complete contact Details)

NAME:-		
ADDRESS:-		
TELEPHONE NUMBER(s):-		
EMAIL ADDRESS:-		
PREFERENCES		
	YES	NO
1	I would prefer to go on a Saturday	
2	I would prefer to go during the week If YES please complete 3	
3	Please indicate preferred days of the week please tick if available	
	Monday	
	Tuesday	
	Wednesday	
	Thursday	
	Friday	
4	I know of 2 non-members that would like to come with me to skid pan training at Hixon (If possible complete the non members details below)	please tick
(i)		
(ii)		

Please return this completed form to:

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Tel: 01597 851668

Email: patriciaj.allen@talk21.com