



# Mid Wales Matters



## The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

Web site: [mwam.powys.org.uk](http://mwam.powys.org.uk)

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**IAM**  
DRIVING ROAD SAFETY

### *In this issue:*

Chairman's Comment	1
Editor's Spot	1
The all-star Bentley	2
AGM 2009	2
SfL Cost Increase	2
Associate Members	3
Chief Observer	3
New Members	3
Associate Course Dates	4
Observer Training Dates	4
Your Committee	4

## Chairman's Comment



I am using my prerogative as Chairman to push out the bounds of credibility somewhat with this railway photo, taken in the early 1940's, of a young lady relief train driver. This photo was taken on 'Top Shed', Kings Cross steam depot in London.

Please note the girl's footwear which, these days, would have caused Health and Safety officials more than just a mild apoplexy. The shoes would, even then, have been regarded as grossly inappropriate - perhaps the scene was staged by the photographer to raise a wartime smile!

However, now comes the reason for me including this in our magazine. How many times have accidents been caused by drivers wearing the wrong type of footwear? Records show that the wearing of carpet slippers, stiletto heeled shoes, wellington boots or no foot-wear at all have been factors in accidents. Having oneself shod with the correct footwear is just as important as having one's car shod with the correct tyres.

Francis Torrens.

**If each member could recruit just one associate per year we would be unable to cope!**

See Page 2

## Editor's Spot

Well, there's a thing.....

The Admiral Insurance Company has just undertaken a survey of 1.6 million of its policy holders and made a startling discovery – lawyers are the least law-abiding drivers with, one in five having traffic convictions. Doctors, police officers, teachers and even clergymen are also more likely to have points on their licences than the average driver.

So, which motorists were the most law-abiding – retired old ladies, road safety professionals? Neither, alas. The winners were hairdressers and beauticians!

## The all-star Bentley

When Cristiano Ronaldo walked away from the wreck of his red Ferrari 599GTB a couple of months ago it didn't bother him too much as he could still go to training in his Bentley Continental GT Speed. As it happens Edwin van der Sar, the MU goalkeeper, was driving behind Ronaldo when the crash occurred, so he was able to give his team-mate a lift in his own identical Bentley. This model bears the nickname "Baby Bentley" as it is the smallest in the range. "Baby" it may be, but it can reach 202mph even without the wind behind it.

Introduced in 2003, the GT revived Bentley's fortunes. The 2-door coupe was revolutionary. It was clearly a Bentley – the traditional symbol of the working-class man made good – but it was a sports car at the same time. It brought a new generation of younger customers who, although not of the upper crust, were celebrities of some kind. One of the first was Gordon Ramsay.

Costing £110,000 the Continental is something of a snip – just two weeks' wages for a Premier League player of middling ability. No fewer than seven current Manchester United players and the manager have been seen behind the wheel of Bentleys. It was a Bentley that John Terry, the England captain left in a disabled parking space last year; it was a Bentley that Wayne Rooney put under the tree for his wife this Christmas – making it a his 'n hers pair.

## Annual General Meeting 2009

The 5th Annual General Meeting of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists was held on Saturday 7th March 2009 at The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells. This was attended by both Group Members and Associates. Our Chairman Francis Torrens addressed the meeting and outlined the achievements of the last year and the challenges for the future. The Secretary Geoff Smith reported on the success of our Associates and Observers. He also commended the Group Newsletter, Mid Wales Matters and the Web Site to members. The audited Group Accounts for 2008 prepared by Mandy Giordano were approved and elections were held for our Officers, Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer together with those for new committee members.

Those Officers appointed to serve for 2009 are:

Chairman: Francis Torrens

Vice Chairman: Peter Gilbert

Secretary: Geoff Smith

Treasurer: Mandy Giordano

Committee Members re-elected for a 3 year term: David Leppard and Humphrey Morgan

Committee Members appointed for a 3 year term: John Scott and Paul Wilson

Committee Member retiring after a 3 year term: Ron Collins

*Geoff Smith*

## Skill for Life Cost Increase

The IAM has announced significant increases in the cost of the Skill for Life (SfL) programmes from 2nd April 2009. The price of SfL is £139 for both cars and motorcycles and the young driver/rider discount of £20 will no longer apply. The previous price was £99 for cars and £109 for motorcycles or £79 and £89 for a young person aged less than 26. This is a significant increase of £60 for a young car driver and £50 for a young motorcyclist.

The IAM reason for this increase is that, at present, the SfL programme is heavily subsidised and the new pricing will reduce but not eliminate this subsidy. They also state that their research has indicated that "the market values the product considerably higher than the current price".

As you may be aware our group is not alone in having difficulty recruiting new associates. Indeed we had to cancel our January course because of a lack of associates. The last course has only two associates so this problem of recruitment is continuing. In the current economic climate this price rise can only exacerbate this problem.

**Our next course starts on 27<sup>th</sup> May 09 and currently we have no associates for this.**

**If each member could recruit just one associate per year we would be unable to cope! Our members are our best advocates so spread the word to friends, colleagues and family of the benefits they could enjoy from becoming a better driver or rider!**

## Associate Membership of MWAM

The IAM Skill for Life (SfL) course fee includes 12 months associate membership of the IAM as it is usual and expected that an associate completes the course within this period. MWAM also includes this first 12 months membership as an associate member of our local group.

When associates complete the course by passing their advanced test they will become full IAM members. In order to retain this status they will have to pay an annual membership subscription directly to the IAM on the anniversary of the date they joined. If they have not completed the course within this 12 month period they will be invited to renew their IAM associate membership to enable them to complete the SfL course. The cost of associate membership of the IAM is the same as full membership which is currently £30 per annum reduced to £28 if paid by direct debit. When the associate passes the IAM test they will automatically transfer to full IAM membership. It is a requirement of the IAM Group Insurance policy that associates are current members of both the IAM and the local group. Consequently any associates who do not complete the SfL course within this initial 12 months period will also be required to renew their associate membership of MWAM. This is currently £10 per annum and will be charged at a pro-rata amount from the anniversary of the day they joined until 31 December of that year. Regrettably any associates who fail to renew both their IAM and MWAM associate membership will be unable continue with their course.






Once the IAM test is passed future membership of MWAM is conditional on continued membership of the IAM. However continued membership of MWAM is not compulsory although your future support of the group which enabled you become an IAM member would be appreciated

## Chief Observer

We are pleased to announce that the group has appointed Paul Wilson from New Radnor as our new Chief Observer. Paul is Senior Car Observer, has been a long standing member of the group and now a committee member. He is an Approved Driving Instructor (ADI) and runs his own driving school. Paul will organise the training of our observers ably assisted by Area Co-ordinators Humphrey Morgan and David Leppard.

## New Members

Congratulations and a warm welcome to the following associates who were successful in their IAM Advanced

Name	Location	Driving  or Riding Test 	Observer	Date
David Reece 	Netwown		Martin Backhouse	Feb 09
Anne Lyons 	Norton		Humphrey Morgan	Feb 09
Stuart Bennett 	New Radnor		Mike Smith/ Chris Engand	Feb 09

## New Member Presentations

David Reece from Newtown, Anne Lyons from Norton and Stuart Bennett from New Radnor are pictured below receiving their certificates and being congratulated by Francis Torrens, Group Chairman, at the new associates' introduction meeting held at the Bracken Trust on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2009.



David Reece

Anne Lyons

Stuart Bennett

## Associate Course Dates



Denotes Car Course



Denotes Motorcycle Course

Course	Start Date	Day	Times		Location
09/3	27/05/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/4	29/07/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
09/5	30/09/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

## Static Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Times		Location
08/07/2009	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:00 PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
01/11/2009	Sunday	2:00PM	!4:00PM	Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

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](http://mwam.powys.org.uk) or contact the group secretary.

**Please contact our Acting Chief Observer Geoff Smith if you require any further details.**

## Your Committee

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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.