

Mid Wales Matters



The Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists

Web site: mwam.powys.org.uk

I AM a better road user ...

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In this issue:

Chairman's Comment	1
Editor's Spot	1
New Members	1
IAM F1RST Register	2
80mph limit	2
Young drivers	2
Associate Course Dates	3
Observer dates	3
Committee	3

Editor's Spot



The vast majority of drivers would be happy for car manufacturers to ditch optional extras in return for better basic features.

Seventy-one per cent of motorists would happily give up heated seats, but most miss having two reversing lights and a temperature gauge on their cars, according to an AA poll of 21,000 members.

Andy Smith, AA patrol of the year, said: "Our members tell us it's gone too far on some models and they want practical over frills. Having two reversing lights makes it easier to reverse down a dim narrow lane, for example, and a temperature gauge can help indicate when the engine is struggling, say when towing or crawling up a hill in heavy traffic."



Seventy per cent said they would happily forgo an electric parking brake, 66 per cent wouldn't miss electrical adjustment on seats and 56 per cent would do



rain-sensing wipers. However, only nine per cent said they would be happy to lose their electric driver windows.

Women are more willing to sacrifice their car's creature comforts than men, according to the survey. Men are less likely to part with heated seats, air-conditioning, parking sensors, electric mirrors, electric passenger windows, cruise control and a trip computer, while women place greater importance on a heated windscreen, electric parking brake, rain-sensing wipers and automatic headlights.

My new car – had you forgotten about it? – is not top of the range, but it still has a load of gizmos that I'll never use. What's Bluetooth for? Why do I need USB connection? Why does the sound system offer more than the Home Service? Otherwise no complaints – the 1 litre engine is lively enough for me, the fuel consumption is more or less as predicted and the dogs love it!

New Members

Congratulations and a warm welcome to the following associates who was successful in his IAM Advanced Driving  or Riding Test 

Name	Location	Observer	Date
Alex Burgess  F1RST	Sennybridge	John Scott	May 12
Stephen Williams 	Welshpool	Nigel Godman	July 12

We offer our congratulations to Alex Burgess as the first of our associates to be awarded F1RST status in his IAM advanced driving test.

IAM F1RST Register

The IAM F1RST Register recognises excellence during the IAM advanced driving or riding test. Members will receive a special certificate and membership card complete with the F1RST logo. Their names are also entered into the F1RST register.

How to get on the F1RST Register

F1RST membership is attained by taking the advanced test for car, motorcycle or commercial vehicle and achieving a score of 1 in every* category.

Existing IAM members can take a Member's Assessment in order to try and achieve the all 1s score*. Existing members who previously passed the test with the qualifying score within the last two years can be added to the Register retrospectively.

The F1RST Register provides a means for IAM members to improve their road skills by retaking an assessment and working on the areas where a score of less than 1 was achieved.

** Our Examiners have the discretion to recommend a candidate even if they score a '2' in no more than three categories (Note: Legality and Slow Manoeuvring must score a '1')*

80mph limit on motorways?

Motorway speed limits will rise to 80mph under plans to be announced this summer, despite opposition from road safety campaigners. The M25, M1, M6, M5, M42 and M20 will be used as test sites as they already have overhead gantries delivering variable speed limits.

Independent advisers say that more people will die as a result of the change, but ministers predict economic benefits as a result of faster travel times. Higher speed limits could be a vote winner for the government, which has pledged to end the "war on motorists". An AA poll showed that two thirds of drivers were in favour of higher limits. Edmund King, the AA President, said: "80mph is already accepted by most as the de facto limit so it is better to legalise it on the safest stretches of motorway and enforce it strictly."

118 people were killed and 798 injured in motorway accidents in 2010, the last year for which figures are available. The Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport safety has warned that the number of casualties would increase by 10% under 80mph limit.

Young drivers still most vulnerable

A report released today by the AA reveals that almost a quarter of young drivers crash in the first six months after passing their test.

Furthermore, nearly 40 per cent of drivers have a crash by the time they are 23. That's according to Young Drivers at Risk, which is based on the findings of a survey of more than 14,000 drivers in the AA/Populus panel, which has been launched by Nigel Mansell.






An analysis of the drivers' first crashes revealed that they were most likely to happen in the daytime (only 13 per cent happen at night) and that bad weather was only a factor in 15 per cent of cases. Sixty-three per cent of people have their first crash without passengers in the car.

Edmund King, director of the AA, said: "Road safety education must be a life skill that starts at the age of three but is continually refreshed throughout life. It needs to begin many years before someone is old enough to apply for their provisional licence.

"If teenagers have had interesting and practical road safety education they are less likely to take dangerous risks when they get behind the wheel alone. Road crashes are not only the leading cause of death and injury for young people in the UK, but also across the world. We need safer drivers in safer cars on safer roads, to reduce these preventable deaths in the UK and across the globe."

Associate Course Dates

 Denotes Car Course  Denotes Motorcycle Course

Course	Start Date	Day	Times		Location
 12/2 	16/05/12	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	CANCELLED
 12/3 	10/07/12	Tuesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
 12/4	26/09/12	Wednesday	7:00 PM	9:30 PM	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells

Static Observer Training Dates

Date	Day	Times		Location
27/10/2012	Saturday	2:00PM	4:00PM	The 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 or contact the group secretary. **Please contact our Chief Observer John Scott if you require any further details.**

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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.