



**MID WALES MATTERS**  
**Newsletter of Mid Wales Advanced Motorists**  
**Registered charity 1109844** **Group 3247**  
*Affiliated to the Institute of Advanced Motorists*

**Volume 13, Issue 3**

**IAMROADSMART**



**IN THIS ISSUE!**

The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells



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# A message from your Newsletter Editor

Hello MWAM members, so here is my final attempt at editing your newsletter, because another volunteer has kindly agreed to take over the baton. You may be aware that the IAM is rebranding itself to IAMRoadSmart. Hence the flash across page 1 and in a new friendly and cuddly bright blue colour scheme. We have designed our new logo for our group which is on the front page of this newsletter.

Our website will be harmonised into the IAMRoadSmart scheme in due course and I hope the process of updating information will be straightforward once the migration process has been undertaken. There are gremlins behind the scenes which are being eradicated by a small team of men with large boots stamping hard on them whenever they appear. At the present time MWAM is still using our btck website pages.

I would be grateful for any local photos of rural mid Wales roads to upload on to our website to present a typical view of what it is like to drive here, to folk thinking of taking part in one of our IAM courses

## IAM HEAD OFFICE MOVE

For sometime the IAM which is a registered charity has been mindful of the costs of being based at Chiswick, London. A recent exercise has been undertaken to explore where to site a new head office and it has been found at Welwyn Garden City. Plans are underway to relocate over the next few months. More to follow - but at least the IAM has acted to reduce the high costs of maintaining a London based head office and cannot be continually criticised by some IAM members for having a preoccupation for being Londoncentric about everything it does.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

On a more jovial note the move by the IAM away from notions of safety may be a step in the wrong direction at a time most Accident and Emergency Departments are finding they are a little busy themselves.

The winning caption for this image is: 'Never mind the bollocks here comes the New Logo' suggested by Clive Todman considering the contribution the Sex Pistols made to music some years ago.



# Driving and Riding Tips on Summer Roads

Now that the holiday season is upon us and here in mid Wales I find the experience of going round the bends in an enjoyable style is somewhat hampered by a group of folk who insist upon breaking half way through every bend. Combined with a contrast from some others on motorcycles with an almost kamikaze determination to get in front. Here is the IAM advice:

With summer bringing more people onto bikes and motorbikes, Simon advises drivers on how best to share the road with other road users.

Keep an eye out for cyclists and motorcyclists and give them lots of space. Especially leave cyclists enough room when you pass them to allow them to move out to negotiate drains and potholes. Overtake thoughtfully. Passing a cyclist quickly might feel safe from inside the metal shell of your car, but it will not for the cyclist – the closer you are, the worse it feels.

Bear in mind that cyclists and certainly motorcyclists may be travelling quicker than you down the same road. Check all of your mirrors regularly so you see bikes approaching from behind.

In particular, check your mirrors before either changing direction or changing lanes, especially in traffic queues.

If a motorcyclist is trying to get past in heavy traffic, let them. Don't hinder their progress just because you are stuck where you are.

Give clear and early signals to allow other road users plenty of time to react.

Don't cut up a cyclist when turning left. Never overtake then turn left across their front wheel.

Check for bikes coming before opening the driver's door when you've parked.

Simon Elstow said: "The most common cause of road accidents is 'failed to look properly' – and this oversight is being made by all kinds of road users. We all need to look out for each other to stamp out these avoidable collisions.

"Most road users don't just use one mode of transport, so use the knowledge you have from the others to practise a bit more patience and understanding of those around you."

# Vehicle Insurance

I am pleased to say that following on from the last newsletter article that my insurance is running well without mishap. My Fiesta ST2 has had its increased 60bhp modifications fitted as desired and is going a bit faster and makes a bit more noise. At the front end the induction roar and dump valve release has produced a sound reminiscent of Darth Vader climbing stairs. At the rear the exhaust has developed a deep roar.

I would be interested to hear from MWAM members their experience of having had a vehicle tweaked to result in more power and performance with lower vehicle insurance premium.

## DRIVING OLD AND NEW

Having experienced driving a new vehicle with increased reliability and performance derived from modern day engineering. In my case a Ford Fiesta ST2 with a chassis which suggests it somehow escaped from the factory rather than be released, and I accept other modern vehicles are not that different. I wondered what it was like for earlier vehicles without the increased complexities of computer controlled systems that we cannot fathom should they go wrong. I found a description about living with a Morris Minor:



The Minor was designed in the early and mid 1940s, and at launch in 1948 was incredibly advanced for the time. However, it was made up until 1971. You climb into the driver's seat, which is quite easy, even for a 6ft 5" person like me, and shut the door. The doors need a bit more oomph to close properly than those of a modern car, but you get used to it. You stick the key in the ignition, located in the centre of the dashboard, not on the steering column. Starting the Minor, even on a cold day, is pretty easy, thanks to the manual choke. You pull it out a couple of inches, and then turn the key. Providing your battery is healthy, it should fire up in a couple of seconds. Then you can use the choke to bring the revs down to a good idling speed. The Minor still lacks all other modern safety features. There are no crumple zones, airbags or side impact protection systems. The steering column isn't collapsible, something which we've taken for granted on cars since at least the early 80s. This means that in a head-on crash, the steering wheel will do quite a nasty injury to your ribcage, instead of falling away like a collapsible one would. The seats do not have headrests, so if someone rear-ends you particularly violently, you'll probably get whiplash. Staying safe on the road is about avoiding accidents in the first place, not surviving them when they happen, and this is where I believe the Minor actually has an advantage. Because it's not that fast, because the brakes are not that good, and because there are no driver aids to help you, your driving style adjusts, and you become a lot more cautious. Where possible, time your overtakes on a downhill stretch of road, so gravity will assist you, foot to the floor, and you'll slowly creep past the lorry, and probably build up a couple of cars behind you.

# Group News

CAR and BIKE NATIONAL OBSERVERS - plans are underway by the IAM to address the shortfall of when police officers are reaching the age of retirement with its impact on lack of IAM Examiners. The IAM may create a pathway for Observers to become Test Examiners, more to follow.....



## Associate Training Course Start Dates 2016

Course	Start Date	Day	Times	Location	
16/4	 26/09/2016	Monday	19:00	21:30	The Bracken Trust, Llandrindod Wells
	 Denotes Car Course				

## Your Contacts

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