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'Ride On' Assessment Scheme For Powys Motorcyclists



Throughout the Summer, motorcyclists living in Powys have been urged to have their skills assessed allowing them to ride safer in the county. Powys County Council's Road Safety Unit has developed an assessment scheme called 'Ride On', the first of its kind in Wales thanks to funding from the Welsh Assembly Government.

The course consists of a 1.5 hour theory session followed by a 1.5 hour practical ride out with officers from Dyfed Powys Police.

Cllr Gwilym Evans, Board Member responsible for Road Safety, said: "Motorcyclists are the most vulnerable road users in Powys. We have the highest number of fatal collisions involving motorcyclists compared to any other counties in Wales. We want to promote safer riding and reduce the number of motorcyclists killed or seriously injured on Powys roads and this assessment, along with other initiatives, will help us achieve this."

Sarah Morris, the council's Senior Road Safety Officer, said: "We assessed over 50 riders during a pilot scheme in 2008 and the feedback we received from those who participated was extremely positive. I would encourage any motorcyclist to take advantage of this scheme, which is the first of its kind in Wales."

If you would like further information on the scheme email peter.wright@powys.gov.uk

Road Casualties Wales, 2008

The latest National Statistics on Road Casualties produced by the Welsh Assembly Government were released on 25 June 2009 according to the arrangements approved by the UK Statistics Authority.

Statistics on Road Casualties include data for Wales for the period up to the end of December 2008. The latest release updates the statistics previously released on 8 July 2008. **The Release**

[Statistical Release 96/2009 \(PDF 192kB\)](#)



The key points from the latest release are:

- During 2008 there were 7,783 road accidents involving personal injury recorded by the police in Wales, 556 (7 per cent) fewer than in 2007.
- These accidents resulted in 11,185 casualties, 1,084 (9 per cent) fewer than in 2007. Within this total:
 - 142 people were killed on Welsh roads in 2008, 19 (12 per cent) fewer than in 2007.
 - 1,253 people were seriously injured in 2008, 15 (1 per cent) more than in 2007.
 - 9,790 people were slightly injured, a decrease of 1,080 (10 per cent) compared to the previous year.



TailGuardian is a unique type of vehicle sign that uses filters to render a message invisible outside a set distance. This technology allows drivers to take advice only when needed.



With driving too close to the vehicle in front a major road collision causation, one cause of this is the driving population's lack of knowledge of vehicle stopping distances at different speeds, coupled with their inability to judge that distance even if they are informed of the correct distance.



TailGuardian combats this risk by advising vehicles behind your vehicle when they are too close - and contributes to the re-education of the driving population to better understand and adopt safe driving distances.

Recently launched, TailGuardian is the only product of its kind designed to manage vehicle road risk and public awareness of safe following distances in traffic.

Road Safety Analysis Website

A new road safety website will be launched in September 2009 at the same time as Road Casualties Great Britain. It is aimed at road safety practitioners and will provide integrated crash and socio-demographic analysis, facilitating decisions about intervention strategies to reduce casualties and increase efficiency.



The aims of the website are to:

- Provide road safety practitioners across the country with accessible and effective tools for incorporating market analysis techniques into the planning and delivery of campaigns
- Encourage more widespread utilisation of valuable and well established market analysis methodologies among the professional road safety community
- Facilitate the exchange of information, good practice and effective techniques in campaign planning and delivery across a wide a range of relevant agencies

Visit www.roadsafetyanalysis.org

A Decade of Action



An international road safety campaign launched in Rome, calls on governments to do more to prevent road accidents worldwide. Governments in all countries must combat the world's fastest growing public health emergency by committing to a road safety 'Decade of Action' which would save 5 million lives and prevent 50 million serious injuries, says the new report by the Commission for Global Road Safety.

The Make Roads Safe Campaign, a group of motoring and health organisations, says nearly two million people die every year on the world's roads and road accidents have overtaken malaria as the leading cause of preventable deaths in developing countries.

In five years time, if nothing is done, traffic accidents will be the biggest single cause of premature deaths for children aged 5 to 14.

The report from the Make Roads Safe Campaign says five million deaths in the next 10 years could be avoided if governments act to introduce more effective policies.

The UN will hold its first conference on road safety later this year.

Read the report [here](#)

The Two-Wheeled Electric Car That Will 'Never Crash'



Traffic congestion, road accidents and vehicles with four wheels could soon become a thing of the past if executives at an ailing U.S. car giant get their way.

General Motors have teamed up with electric scooter maker Segway to develop a two-wheeled, two-seat electric vehicle designed to be a fast, safe, inexpensive and clean alternative to traditional cars for cities across the world.

The Personal Urban Mobility and Accessibility, or PUMA, project also would involve a vast communications network that would allow vehicles to interact with each other, regulate the flow of traffic and prevent crashes from happening.

The prototype runs on a lithium-ion battery and uses Segway's two-wheel balancing technology, along with dual electric motors. It's designed to reach speeds of up to 35mph and can run 35 miles on a single charge.

Ideally, the vehicles would also be part of a communications network that through the use of GPS technology would allow them to drive themselves.

The vehicles would automatically avoid obstacles such as pedestrians and other cars and therefore never crash.

While putting that kind of communications infrastructure in place may still be a way off for many cities, the company is looking for a place, such as a college campus, where the vehicles could be put to use and grab a foothold in the market.

Young Drivers at Work

RoSPA has published a new report entitled 'Young Drivers at Work', funded by the Department for Transport, which looks at the risks faced and created by young drivers (aged between 17 and 24 years) whilst driving for work.

'Young Drivers at Work' also investigates what further education or training resources could help employers to ensure the safety of young drivers, and identifies overarching themes from the views of the respondents.

- [RoSPA Young Drivers at Work Report](#) (728kb)



RoSPA Web Shop



Yes - after almost a decade rooted in the car boot of e-commerce, RoSPA has finally entered the plush department store of cyberspace.

RoSPA customers can now purchase all 400+ RoSPA products securely online using a credit or debit card. In addition, RoSPA Members, using an exclusive voucher code, automatically receive their 15% discount.

Take a look at: www.rospashop.com

Rear Facing Car Seats Safest For Children Under 4 Years Old

Parents should be advised to keep young children in rear facing car seats for as long as possible, state doctors in a paper published on bmj.com.



It is common practice to switch babies to a forward facing car seat at 9kg (approx. 8 months of age), but there is mounting evidence that it is safer for young children to travel in a rear facing seat until 4 years of age, write Drs Elizabeth Watson and Michael Monteiro.

For instance, data from Sweden where rear facing up to age 4 is common practice, has shown that children who died in accidents restrained in forward facing booster seats could have potentially survived if they had been travelling in rear facing seats.

Recent crash tests have also reported that rear facing seats resulted in significantly lower neck and chest injury measures compared with forward facing seats. The authors of another crash simulation study encouraged manufacturers to develop rear facing seats for children up to 4 years of age.

The authors explain that, unlike forward facing seats, rear facing car seats keep the head, neck and spine fully aligned so the crash forces are distributed over all of these body areas.

They believe part of the problem is that many parents and healthcare providers may be unaware that it is safer to leave children in rear facing seats for as long as possible, or that rear facing seats for toddlers exist. Healthcare professionals should advise that rear facing seats are safer than forward facing seats for children under 4 years, say the authors.

They also call on manufacturers and retailers to increase the availability of rear facing seats for older children and for a change to the current weight-range labelling of European seats, which may imply that forward facing seats are as safe as rear facing seats for children over 9kg.

Steve Baker, Head of RoSPA Wales, said: "We support the call to make rearward-facing seats for older toddlers more widely available as a way of improving parental choice about the safety of their children. The evidence shows that it is safer for children to travel rearward-facing for as long as possible, although that does not mean forward-facing seats are 'dangerous'.

"For parents who currently have a child in a rearward-facing 0+ car seat and are wondering what to do next, our advice is to keep them in that seat until they reach the upper end of the weight range (13kg), unless they have grown out of the seat in terms of their height (this is to do with the position of their head - check manufacturers' guidelines). If their height means they can continue to use their current seat for longer, don't be tempted to switch your child to forward-facing as soon as they reach the minimum weight in the weight range stated on the next seat up.

"Ideally, parents who are considering using a rearward-facing seat for older toddlers would be able to try out one of the seats in their car before buying it to ensure it fits safely and securely. This is why greater availability of rearward-facing seats in UK sales outlets is important, so parents do not order a potentially-misfitting seat over the internet before they have had a chance to seek expert guidance about fitting it in their car. Retailers also need to be appropriately trained to help parents.



"Also, there is a real need for parents to make sure that child car seats of any type are fitted correctly whenever they are taken in and out of the car. Surveys have shown that many child car seats are misfitted, meaning they won't offer the full protection that they are able to give."

Further child car seat information can be found at www.childcarseats.org.uk

The Transport Select Committee has published, as a special report, the Government's full response to its 2008 report *Ending the Scandal of Complacency: Road Safety beyond 2010*. Several of the key recommendations made in that report now feature strongly among the proposals made by the Government in its new road safety strategy consultation (*A Safer Way: Consultation on making Britain's roads the safest in the world*).

Committee Chairman Louise Ellman says, "3,000 people die every year on our roads, including far too many young people. It is good to see the Government acknowledge the 'massive social and economic costs' of this major public health challenge."

"The Government proposes to restore Britain's position as a world leader in road safety. The Committee has made clear that this must take full account of economic, health and environmental objectives and that success will depend on the extent to which road safety becomes a priority for the whole Government, and not merely a goal for Department for Transport. Strong leadership and co-ordinated involvement from the Home Office, the DoH, BERR and the Cabinet Office will be vital to ensure effective action."

In line with the Committee's recommendations the Government has pledged to place higher priority on the safety of children and young people in deprived areas as well as motorcyclists. Likewise, the Government has accepted a Committee suggestion to shift towards a 'systems' approach to road safety, where vehicles, roads and traffic regulations are all designed to common standards so that inevitable road user errors do not result in death. This means more 20mph limits in towns and greater safety on rural roads.

Over the last decade deaths have declined far less than serious injuries and the Committee has expressed concern about the reliability of accident statistics. The Government has accepted the Committee's recommendation to set a challenging new target for reducing deaths that is separate from a target for serious injuries. It has also accepted the need for greater independent advice and scrutiny, proposing an independent expert panel.

The Government has not accepted the Committee's recommendations on several matters including:

- the need for drivers to have at least one year's experience before obtaining a full licence;
- restrictions on novice drivers carrying teenage passengers at night;
- the case for lowering the blood-alcohol limit for novice drivers; and
- the need to set targets for the percentage of primary school children given pedestrian and cycle training.

The Committee has previously expressed concern that improving driver training will not be enough to stem the tragic loss of so many young lives.

Contact the Editor

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